

NO MORE HEROES

The ENNIE award-winning fantasy horror game ZWEIHÄNDER is back in a new edition!

This tabletop role-playing game contains everything you need to play: a player's handbook, a gamemaster's guide, a monster manual, and a full-length adventure.

Take on the mantle of one of the 14 ancestries like human, dhampyr, elf, firbolg, gargoyle, or woodwose. Craft flawed characters from over 100 medieval professions, like blasphemmer, pugilist, smuggler, or witch.

Your broken heroes will navigate political machinations, conjure forbidden magic, and battle horrifying creatures from beyond the grave.

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ZWEIHÄNDER Reforged Edition is backward compatible with adventures from the original edition, including those created by Andrews McMeel Publishing and Grim & Perilous Studios.

ZWEIHÄNDER

REFORGED
EDITION

DANIEL D.
FOX

REFORGED EDITION

ZWEIHÄNDER

CORE RULEBOOK

ZWEIHÄNDER

REFORGED EDITION

ZWEIHÄNDER

REFORGED EDITION

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When I was young, I thought my father would be the hardest thing to survive.

He was a battle-worn mercenary and everything I swore I would never become. After his sword ran my mother through, I dedicated my life to killing him. Never once did I dare to think there was more to his story. I was there. I saw the light leave her eyes and the dark hunger in his face when he drunkenly stumbled from our house and disappeared from my life.

When I grew older, I felt I was finally ready to gut him, to deliver the justice that he so rightfully deserved. But when I tracked him down, he was not the man I remembered. I saw the remains of who he was, those shreds of humanity he had clung to, gone. Years of fighting had turned him into less of a man and more of a monster, hardened by violence.

My anger boiled, and our blades met. He turned my attacks away as a parent would overpower a child playing at war. He was a honed weapon, and I was still the unrefined knife.

In our battle, I slipped, and his sword found purchase. There was a crimson blossom, then white-hot searing pain.

"Lior, my light . . . I am so sorry," he bade.

He stared into my eyes, whispering his apologies as if I could forgive him.

I should have died that day. But I didn't.

Whatever vile deal he had struck that had kept him alive for so long was laid bare and offered to me. I could die, sink into the unknowable void. Or I could take the pain and turn it into something more. My need for revenge made the choice easy, and I awoke in the mud, just like he had years ago.

Afterward, things started happening I couldn't explain—monsters from the depths of my imagination manifested, wanton cultists beckoned me to their realms, and phantoms of those I'd killed followed in my wake. I was marked. Turning back the tide of the dark wasn't a calling. It was the cost of having a pulse.

The next time I found my father was many years later. I found a man broken by the world's soft decay, like a rotten tooth infecting a body.

I stilled my knife. By that time, after the blood of hundreds was on my hands, I knew that letting Danziger live was the greater punishment.

That was the moment I realized I would eventually face the same fate. To lose my humanity. To become hollowed out, just like him. Father and daughter, united in our bloodshed. United in our darkness.

- Lior Eckhardt, mercenary & survivor

*The characters, situations, and world of **ZWEIHÄNDER** are a work of fiction. This game was designed and produced by a team with diverse beliefs, experiences, and identities.*

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Dedicated to Ali, Jack, Charlie, and Mum

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CHAPTER I: WELCOME TO ZWEIHÄNDER

ZWEIHÄNDER is a cooperative role-playing game set in a gothic horror fantasy world. It is a game of gallows humor, social intrigue, mystery, superstition, and vendettas meted out using iron, blackpowder, and sorcery.

What is REFORGED?

The **Reforged Edition** is an evolution of the original **Revised Core Rulebook** and **Starter Kit**. It isn't a new edition but a remaster, applying everything we've learned over the last six years of gameplay. It encompasses numerous changes that incorporate the feedback we've received from playtesters and the community. It provides a host of all-new character options and further refinements to the system.

Chiefly, this book is backward compatible with the original game line. We've provided conversion advice in **Chapter 11: Game Mastery** so you can bring your entire **ZWEIHÄNDER** library up to speed with this book.

A Morally Gray World

This game is one of brutality, ruthlessness, comeuppance, and superstition. But it isn't based on the traditional dichotomy of good versus evil. Instead, it is a game of moral nuance, cast in shades of gray between rare extremes of black and white.

This world is one where the upright perishes while the unjust lingers. Society stands on the edge of both



existential and literal collapse. Order tends to prevail over anarchy, but the cost is high. While a brighter tomorrow exists, it is only for a vaunted few.

Humanity & The Forgotten

ZWEIHÄNDER is humanocentric; thus, humans are the default ancestry in the game, and everyone speaks their shared tongue. However, you can also play one of the Forgotten: ancestries with unusual history and ambitions, such as the enigmatic masked siabra, living statues of pure innocence called the awakened, and the woodwise, dwellers of the under-root.

Survivors, Not Adventurers

It's assumed that your player characters, called survivors, were ordinary people who never strayed far from their place of birth. Eventually, they confronted their own death and survived. But they didn't escape without a scar—one that could be physical, emotional, or spiritual. This led to an all-new outlook on life.

Following this life-altering experience, your survivor carries a memento of that near-fatal moment. Leaving practically everything behind, your survivor banded together with others who'd faced a brush with death. Their lives are now filled with introspection, epiphany, and catharsis.

Yet these survivors aren't wide-eyed neophytes or people destined for greatness. Instead, they are ordinary people who live in a world of fear and fight for their convictions.

Superstition & Stratification

An ever-present fear of the unknown compels the social classes that dominate traditional society. Superstition reigns supreme. Peoples' perceptions of the supernatural world around them are just as crucial as the diseases that ravage the countryside.

Most people live a staid and fearful existence. Aristocrats enjoy endless privilege, while the lowborn struggle to make ends meet. Sandwiched in between are commoners, who neither the aristocracy nor the lowborn appreciate.



Occultism & Heresy

Ordinary people have little, if any, understanding of magic's inner workings. In fact, many have an irrational fear of it. Those who call themselves clerics or wizards are often venal charlatans consumed by delusions of grandeur.

Though the gods are distant and uncaring, their fickle gifts are sometimes bestowed upon a vexing few. Those the gods reject steal power from a place beyond reckoning called the Ethereal Veil. True sorcerers are

either worshiped by the ignorant, publicly castigated by the fearful, or marked for death by the church.

No More Heroes

This isn't a game of zero to hero, but *zero to one*.

It's not a story about how your survivors will change the world—instead, the world will change them. This is a personal story about how survivors struggle to retain their sense of self as they root around in the filth. There are no happy endings or heroes, only people trying to survive.

Stakes & Tragedy

Monsters aren't the only danger; people can be equally monstrous. Villagers can readily drag a tuned-up knight off their steed and beat them to a bloody pulp. And, in this game, there is no remedy to reattach an arm hacked off by a peasant's sickle. There is no godly boon to wipe away the shock of a friend being torn to pieces by a raving mob. No prayers can revive the dead from the Well of Souls.

In **ZWEIHÄNDER**, health doesn't miraculously recover overnight. Naps don't heal stab wounds. Diseases are a real threat. People must eat, recover from their illnesses, and take time to care for their wounds. But some scars—both physical and spiritual—are just too deep to mend.

Violence & Opportunity

In a dark fantasy world, death means something. However, mercy and sacrifice are more meaningful. Your survivor stands against society's disillusionment, pessimism, and depravity.

Given these considerations, it is easy to believe that nihilism guides your survivor's journey. They've grown resilient against the horrors most are so terribly susceptible to. It makes them some of the only people capable of standing against the darkness.

Tragic Flaw & Inner Strength

Your survivor will uncover profound mysteries, reveal double dealings, and expose wickedness at its very core.



Will they rise above the brutality or become what they despise? The conflict between your Inner Strength and Tragic Flaw is at the heart of these stories.

In their search for the truth about themselves and the world around them, survivors often jump into horrific situations that will test their resolve. Every trial gradually erodes the foundation of who they are while desensitizing them. Too many brushes with gray decision-making and terrifying monsters can affect a survivor's capacity for clear, rational thought. They will either adapt to it or surrender to the darkness.

Bonds With Other Survivors

Despite its entropic grasp, the survivor's psychological struggle is vital to the story. It drives many of the underlying themes of this game and promotes a concrete reason for survivors to band together and rage against the dying of the light. Their bonds inform how they survive in a world poised against them.

Hope is often a pale glimmer, and even a significant victory is just a footnote in history. Don't let this discourage you, though—what survivors do together in the present matters most.

Mature Themes & Open Communication

The game will sometimes pit your survivors against enemies who use heinous, prejudicial, and other vile acts to justify their ends. Your survivors will fight against these institutions with all their might, just as we must confront prejudice in real life.

Open communication is essential. If you need clarification about the story or feel uncomfortable with its content, call for a quick “time-out.” The game will be paused, and everyone will address concerns together before resuming.

Reading This Book

Most rules are written in the second person, i.e., speaking to you, the player, implying you are role-playing a survivor. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, rules that apply to you also apply to both survivors and the creatures the game master controls.

Throughout the book, we use the singular “they” and its inflected forms—them and their—for non-specific or unknown genders. Play examples will reference the pronoun appropriate to the player's or survivor's identity.

Capitalized words in **Bold** are terms relevant to gameplay, and when **underlined and bold**, they're chapter references. Sepia boxes are for everyone to read, call-out boxes are tips for the game master, and gray boxes are for gameplay examples.

ZWEIHÄNDER awaits, and your survivor's fate hangs in the balance! We can't wait to hear how it turns out. Come share your experiences on our Discord at <https://discord.gg/Zweihander>

Our Themes & Inspirations

Dark Fantasy: Kentarō Miura's *Berserk*
 Ethical Dilemma: *The Witcher*
 Folk Horror: *The VVitch*
 Folk Tales: *Grimms' Fairy Tales*
 Gothic Horror: *Bloodborne*
 High Action: *Brotherhood of the Wolf*
 Historic Accounts: Thirty Years' War
 Medieval Mystery: *Black Death*
 Mercenary Stories: *The Black Company*
 Occult Magic: *Vagrant Story*
 Politicking: *Tactics Ogre*
 Profession-based System: *WFRP*
 Psychoactive Journeys: *A Field in England*
 Renaissance RPG: *Maelstrom*
 Soap Operas: *Game of Thrones*
 Supernatural Threats: *Castlevania*



CHAPTER 2: LEARN TO PLAY

The golden rule for **ZWEIHÄNDER** is this: keep the game moving forward! If you forgot a rule, ignore it and look it up later. If a rule gets in the way of having fun, work together to create a house rule for your table.

How Gameplay Works

The game uses an intuitive percentile dice (D100) system. Rolls and bookkeeping that don't keep the action moving forward should be ignored. Complexity is layered in slowly, and rules can be easily ignored in favor of telling a compelling story.

When you and some friends sit down to play a game, it's called a session. They tend to last from 1 to 3 hours in the real world. You'll need anywhere from two to six friends to play a session, but it can also be played one-on-one.

Your player characters, called survivors, are the focus of the session and central to the story. The rules are designed to present you with meaningful choices. Words can be just as dangerous as weapons, so use both to your advantage.



Every session will include one or more challenges guided by a storyteller/rules referee called the **Game Master (GM)**. Your sessions move in a free-flowing conversation, scene-by-scene, like a television show. And whenever a critical situation arises with uncertain outcomes, the GM will have you use dice to determine what happens.

In each scene, you'll participate in the five pillars of gameplay, with each requiring your wits, words, and weapons to survive. You'll often talk in-character in narrative time, a free-flowing back-and-forth form of storytelling called **narrative scenes**. When narrative scenes become tense, you will use **intrigue scenes**. When a scene leads to you trying to escape or if an enemy runs away, you will switch to a **chase scene**. You'll use **travel scenes** for long periods of travel across the wilderness. However, whenever you battle against foes to further the story, you'll move into structured time for a **fight scene**. These scenes frequently cross over with one another.

Multiple scenes strung together make up an adventure, and they can transpire over hours, days, weeks, months, or years of in-game time (the passage of time from your survivor's perspective). Time in-game moves in flux with the story, sometimes moment-by-moment, other times fast-forwarded and even backward for flashback scenes as needed. A series of adventures is called a **campaign**, where your survivors will change and grow with the travails they face.

Unlike board games, the only way to "win" is to have a good time. Together, you'll go on perilous undertakings. Your survivor will win hearts and minds by being bold in the face of danger. They'll undergo personal trials and take on indelible scars. But the stories you tell and the memories you make with one another will allow everyone to win.

Role-Playing A Survivor

You and your friends play characters called **survivors**. They were once normal, everyday people (as normal as you could be in a medieval-inspired, dark fantasy world). But they faced their death and somehow survived, forever changed by their experience. Your survivor finds themselves among others who've also lived to tell the tale and have embarked on a new path.

Your survivors are the story's main characters. You'll role-play as if you are them: acting, feeling, and thinking like them. This also means you're responsible for highlighting their strengths and weaknesses while playing to the relationships they've built with other survivors.

Survivors are damaged people looking for answers. Their methods and views are likely very different from yours, but they are still a person with feelings, hopes, and dreams.

Reward Points

In some tabletop role-playing games, killing fantastical monsters and plundering dungeons are the typical ways to improve characters. However, **ZWEIHÄNDER** rewards players for role-playing their survivor's personality traits in tense situations.

At the end of every session, you will gain anywhere from 5 to 15 Reward Points (called **RP**), a form of metacurrency you will spend to Unlock your survivor's abilities. Spending RP is fully covered in **Chapter 4: Professions**.

Being The Game Master

One of your friends (or maybe even you!) will take on the challenging role of the Game Master (the GM). A GM is the lead storyteller, conjuring up an adventure's dark horrors and unusual mysteries.

You'll control other friends and enemies the survivors interact with and the monsters they fight.

Survivors, Creatures, Allies & Foes

Survivors are always player characters, while others controlled by the GM are called non-player characters (NPCs) or creatures. An ally is any NPC or creature willing to participate in your cause; a foe is the opposite. For purposes of interpreting game rules, you are considered to be your own ally.

This game accommodates a playstyle where role-playing drives the story, but you and the players are partners in telling the story. When the survivors face a challenge, a GM calls for players to roll dice to see what happens. Skip the mundane parts of the adventure, focusing on action, intrigue, and mystery.

Finally, you're the rules referee, making final game mechanic decisions. Making rulings is far more important than mastering the rules. Focus on moving the story forward if the session slows to a crawl.

GM Tip: The Adventure Begins!

The Reforged Edition contains an adventure called The Chateau. The Starter Kit includes the Secrets of Swanzi adventure. You can also head directly into the campaign Eternal Night Of Lockwood! Find more third-party and fan-made adventures for **ZWEIHÄNDER** at DriveThruRPG.

What To Expect

A session tends to work like this:

Step 1: The GM sets the scene by describing what your survivors see and experience. A scene is drawn from a written undertaking or campaign but may also be a story of their devising. It'll play towards your survivor's senses and present story hooks for them to follow up on. In the included adventure, The Chateau, the GM will likely read the boxed text aloud to set the scene.

Step 2: You will interact with other players and friendly or unfriendly creatures in the scene, saying how your survivor reacts to what they discover. In a free-flowing conversation, you'll ask the GM questions about your survivor's surroundings and situations. The GM will ask

you to write down on index cards the names of people you meet, new places you uncover, and essential things you discover (called **People/Places/Things Cards**). A GM will call for dice rolls when activities have potential risks.

Step 3: The GM describes how the world reacts to your choices and narrates the outcome. Every survivor is an individual with different agendas and interests. A GM sometimes asks you to talk specifically about what your survivor is doing and how they feel, and other times, they ask how you as a group will proceed.

Step 4: If a scene erupts into a fight, you'll use [Chapter 7: Fight Scenes](#) to drive the drama. Using the abilities from your survivor sheet (in the [Appendix](#)), the GM pits you against both mundane and terrifying monsters. A fight usually ends in retreat, surrender, or death.

Step 5: Scenes don't always have to culminate in a fight scene; some may break into a chase, investigation, tense negotiation, or even travel scenes. You'll use [Chapter 9: Narrative Tools](#) during those scenes. When other kinds of scenes come to a close, the GM moves players back to the first step, and so on. Fluidity is critical, so these steps should change and flow with the story as needed.

Acting & Narrating

Some players act out their survivor's actions using improv in the first person. Others prefer to narrate their actions, explaining them in the third person.

Tim (as Natasha Steeples), Acting: *With her crossbow, I say, "Lay down your arms, or die in obscurity!"*

Tim (as Natasha Steeples), Narrating: *Natasha loads her crossbow and says something menacing that will scare the cutthroats into dropping their weapons!*

Flashback Scenes

With GM approval, players can set scenes to flesh out their survivor's backstory.

Adam (as Lyndon Geneveux): *I want to set a scene that happened in the past where he could have extracted the name of the cutthroat's leader. I want it to give me an upper hand in this situation.*

GM: *Yep! Okay, so we cut away to Lyndon. He's at a winesink with one of his goons and is deep in his cups. Adam, what would you suggest happens in this scene?*

Special Dice

Six-sided Die (D6): These are typically used for inflicting Damage with Combat-based Skill Tests. You'll generate results from 1 to 6. **Rolling high on a D6 is good!**

When dealing Damage, if you roll face "6", it "**explodes**." Roll another 1D6 and add it to the total. There is no cap to the number of face "6s" you can explode.



Ten-sided Die (D10): These are used for rolling Initiative and Peril, falling, fire, and Damage with spells. Always treat face "0" as a value of 10 unless rolling percentile dice. **Rolling high on D10 is good!**

When dealing Damage and Peril, if you roll face "0" (treated as a value of 10), it "**explodes**." Roll another 1D10 and add it to the total. There is no cap to the number of face "10s" you can explode.



Percentile Dice (D100): These are a pair of differently-colored 10-sided dice. One die is the tens die, and the other differently-colored die is the ones die. **Rolling low on D100 is good!**

Rolling D100 is how you determine whether you succeed at doing things in the game. You'll generate results ranging from 1% to 100%.



Reading Unusual Dice Results

- ❖ Face “6” on tens and face “9” on ones = **69%**
- ❖ Face “9” on tens and face “6” on ones = **96%**
- ❖ Face “0” on tens and face “0” on ones = **100%**
- ❖ Face “0” on tens and face “1” on ones = **1%**
- ❖ Face “1” on tens and face “0” on ones = **10%**

Primary Attributes

Primary Attributes represent all creatures’ raw physical, mental, and social capabilities. They range in numeric values between 32% to 65%. The higher the value, the more likely you will succeed in your actions.

Agility is your speed, dexterity, and physical readiness.

Brawn is your durability, endurance, and physical prowess.

Combat is your ability to use weapons.

Fellowship is your charisma, likability, and social savvy.

Intelligence is your ability to learn and study facts.

Perception is your senses and ability to react.

Willpower is your mental resolve and ability for magic.

Skills & Tests

Sooner or later, a decisive situation will arise, a point of no return that a conversation alone cannot fix. Then it’s time to break out D100 to roll a Skill Test! Simply describe an action you want to take, and the GM will tell you which Skill to Test. Ranks in a Skill, combined with its related Primary Attribute, determine the number you need to roll under.

Skills Descriptions

Combined with your Primary Attributes, Skills determine how effectively you can perform specific actions in the game. Each Skill Rank confers a +10% cumulative bonus to use a Skill (to a maximum of three Ranks or +30%). However, you don’t need Ranks to try Testing a Skill.

Every Skill below is listed by its proper name. The related Primary Attribute follows, briefly describing how it can be used. Talk with the GM if you want to use a Skill differently.

Athletics

(Brawn-based): Participating in feats of strength. It reflects your ability to climb surfaces and ropes, tread water and swim without tiring, propel vessels while rowing, overpower others in contests of strength, and push heavy objects.

Awareness

(Perception-based): Noticing minute details and sounds, eavesdropping, lipreading, and spotting snares designed to trap or kill. You’ll also use it to gather information through the five senses. For understanding motives or using memory, use Insight.

GM Tip: Don’t Roll to Find Clues

If players describe that they are searching an area with Awareness, never have them roll dice to find clues or traps. Let them discover it freely. Awareness Tests are to deduce how to interpret them.

Blackpowder

(Combat-based): Wielding weapons that utilize alchemical substances as a propellant. It allows you to safely handle small and large quantities of blackpowder while knowing how to load and adequately fire them. This covers both one- and two-handed blackpowder weapons.

Coordination

(Agility-based): Being dexterous, maintaining balance, and moving gracefully. This Skill can help you escape restraints, avoid falling debris, manipulate objects delicately, and stay on your feet.

Craft

(Willpower-based): Create useful supplies, such as blackpowder, laudanum, and weapons. You can also use it to jury-rig items, counterfeit money, falsify writing, and create false works of art. Learn more in [Chapter 6: Equipment](#).

Disguise

(Fellowship-based): Acting as another social class and hiding your identity from others. The more you know about the people or person you're trying to hide from or mimic, the more effective your disguise is. Disguise is for hiding physical appearance. For hiding intentions and motives, use Guile.

Folklore

(Intelligence-based): Knowing the histories and notable people of the world confers an understanding of other cultures. It is also the practice of worshiping the principal gods of the known world. For deeper knowledge about the higher mysteries of magic, use Occultism.

Gamble

(Intelligence-based): Fixing fights and playing parlor games such as cards, darts, and dice. You can use it to spot common mistakes, assess risky maneuvers, and prey upon your opponents' weaknesses. It's also used to cheat at games of chance.

Guile

(Fellowship-based): Using bluster and underhandedness to get what you want. You can manipulate others' feelings and hide emotions or motives. It's also used to play word games, use irony, and engage in political machinations. To inspire others, use Persuasion.

Handling

(Brawn-based): Domesticating, riding, and training of common animals. You can also sail water vessels, from large ships to small rowboats. It also represents your ability to drive stagecoaches and other vehicles. Finally, it covers animal care and maintenance of vehicles and vessels.

Insight

(Perception-based): Remembering events and sensing underlying intentions. It relies on hearing and vision to assess each participant's part in a conversation and deduce tone and intent from the written word. It also allows for quick estimation. For your normal five senses, use Awareness.

Leechcraft

(Intelligence-based): Understanding the spiritual workings of the body and how the wounded can be treated by paying heed to the temperaments. It is used to Bind Wounds to heal Damage and treat Afflictions, Diseases, and Injuries with Chirurgery. Learn more in [Chapter 8: Healing & Hazards](#).

Layman's View of Medicine

Modern ideas about germs and bacteria are unknown. Sickness is attributed to excess humours (bodily fluids), miasma (bad air), and the influence of evil spirits.

Melee

(Combat-based): Wielding makeshift and other handheld weapons. It allows you to identify other melee weapons and make simple repairs. It also allows you to cobble together new makeshift weapons from new and used materials.

Occultism

(Willpower-based): Channeling the divine magic of a deity from the Well of Souls and weaving the strands of the arcane from beyond the Ethereal Veil. It can identify strange symbols, interpret omens, and form pacts with entities from the Vault of Night. Learn more in [Chapter 10: The Grimoire](#).

Persuasion

(Fellowship-based): Change attitudes, beliefs, or emotions and haggle over prices. You can also use wit to entertain, write poetry, and provide leadership. Use Guile for lies, false accounts, or con games. Use Toughness to intimidate someone.

Ranged

(Combat-based): Wielding weapons used at a distance. This includes shooting bows, targeting with arbalests, and throwing weapons. It also allows you to perform general repairs on them. For firearms, use Blackpowder.

Resolve

(Willpower-based): Keeping calm under pressure. It allows you to steel your mind, focusing on your inner strength to resist mental Peril. You can also extract answers from an unwilling subject through interrogation using physical and psychological torture.

Stealth

(Agility-based): Using concealment in the wilderness, hiding in crowds, and causing distractions to move about without being seen or heard. You can also lay in wait to ambush others. Stalking someone in a group, hiding caches of loot, or hiding horses and vehicles are also part of this Skill.

Survival

(Perception-based): Determining routes using landmarks and the stars. You know about local flora and fauna and can live off the land, hunt, and forage for food. It also confers street knowledge and how to navigate safely through local gangs and politics.

Thievery

(Agility-based): You can perform sleight of hand and pick pockets. You can bypass locked doors and chests without a key, and disable security contrivances, elaborate traps, or palm objects using simple misdirection. To sneak, use Stealth, and for lies, use Guile.

Toughness

(Brawn-based): Leaning on your stamina to overcome fatigue or physicality to intimidate. It reflects the ability to undergo exposure to the elements, resist physical Peril, and hold your breath underwater. To resist horrific situations, use Resolve.

Rolling A Skill Test

Step 1: Before stating an action you wish to take, determine how stressed and tired your survivor is by looking at the Peril Condition Track. It represents the hardship your survivor has endured between periods of rest. The value ranges from no penalty to -20%.

Example: *In the middle of a fight with a watchman, Sarah's survivor, Suspirianci, wants to rig a lantern with a charge of blackpowder to explode. She is currently at -5% to Skill Tests on the Peril Condition Track, so Suspirianci begins with a -5%.*

Step 2: State an action your survivor will take, and the GM will declare the Difficulty Rating of the Test and the Skill you need to roll for. Difficulty Rating imparts additional ease or hardship to a Test. Most are treated as (Normal +/-0%). But sometimes, the GM will assign hardship or ease (**Difficulty Rating**) due to external factors:

- ❖ **Easy:** +20% to Skill Tests
- ❖ **Normal:** +/-0% to Skill Tests
- ❖ **Hard:** -20% to Skill Tests

Example: *The GM tells Suspirianci to roll a Hard Blackpowder Test. She is suffering a -5% on Skill Tests from the Peril Condition Track, and the Test is (Hard -20%), making it a -25%.*

Step 3: Find the Skill on your survivor sheet and count the Skill Ranks you've unlocked. Each Rank adds +10%. You can still try a Test even if you don't have Ranks in a Skill.

Example: *Suspirianci is at -5% from the Peril Condition Track, and the Difficulty Rating is (Hard -20%). Since she has three Skill Ranks in Blackpowder (+30%), she'd have a +5%.*

Step 4: Find the Primary Attribute value related to the Skill and add it to this value. Primary Attributes represent your raw mental, physical, and spiritual capabilities. Every Skill is related to one Primary Attribute, with a value ranging from 32% to 65%.

Example: *Suspirianci is at -5% from the Peril Condition Track, and the Difficulty Rating is (Hard -20%), but she has three Skill Ranks in Blackpowder (+30%) for a total adjustment of +5%. Blackpowder is related to her Combat value of 59%, so she'd have 64%.*

Step 5: Grab D100, call out to the GM what your total chance is, and roll the dice. Your total chance cannot exceed 99% and cannot be less than 1%. If the results are equal to or less than your total chance, you **succeed** at the Test. If the results exceed the total chance, you **fail** the Test. If the dice show matching numbers (such as a "4" and "4"), you generate either a Critical Success or Critical Failure.

Example: *Suspirianci has a 64% chance on her Blackpowder Test. She rolled 46%, so she succeeded!*

Success & Failure

The context of the scene or the GM will interpret what happens whenever you **succeed on a Skill Test**. However, something goes wrong whenever you **fail on a Skill Test**. Finally, you can choose to automatically fail a Test at any time (such as having your survivor become Drunk).

Crit Success & Crit Failure

Sometimes, when you roll a D100, the first number on the tens die matches the ones die (such as rolling a face "3" on your tens die and a face "3" on your ones die). This results one of two outcomes:

Critical Success: You achieved what you wanted in a daring way! In addition to succeeding on your Test, you trigger other special effects tied to fight actions, spells, Talents, or a narrative benefit. However, you cannot re-roll a Critical Success using Fortune Coins or Talents.



Example: *Suspirianci has a 64% chance on her Blackpowder Test. To Critically Succeed, she'd have to roll a 55%, 44%, 33%, 22%, or 11%.*

Critical Failure: You messed up in a memorable way! In addition to failing your Test, you trigger other special effects tied to fight actions, spells, and Talents or a narrative drawback. However, you cannot re-roll a Critical Failure using Fortune Coins or Talents.

Example: *Suspirianci has a 64% chance on her Blackpowder Test. To Critically Fail, she'd have to roll a 66%, 77%, 88%, or 99%.*

Rolling 01 Or 100

A result of 1% (faces “0” and “1”) is always treated as a Critical Success, and a result of 100% (faces “0” and “0”) is always treated as a Critical Failure.



Help Die

You can help other survivors with their Skill Tests. Some weapons and Talents can also contribute. To assist on a Test, you must have at least one Skill Rank in the Skill being Tested. Hand a 1D10 **Help Die** to the player you're assisting.

Unlike regular Tests, you will roll 2D10. Pick the better result (usually, the lower number) for your tens die. Then, assess the ones die by rolling a separate 1D10 to determine the outcome. Calculate your final result to see if you succeeded or failed the Test. You can only use one **Help Die** on a Test.

Example: *Lyndon has a Skill Rank in Blackpowder and offers to help Suspirianci concoct her Blackpowder explosive device. Suspirianci rolls 2D10 and produces a result of “9” and “5”. She picks the result of “5” for the tens die, then rolls a final 1D10 and comes up with a “3”. This produces a calculated result of 53%.*



Hindrance Die

In certain situations, you may suffer a **Hindrance Die**. It works nearly the same as above, but instead of rolling 2D10 for your tens die value and choosing the better result, pick the worst one. You can only suffer 1 Hindrance Die on a Test.

Edge Cases: If you are faced with a situation where you gain a Help Die but suffer a Hindrance Die, they cancel each other out.

Fail Forward

Sometimes, a failed Test doesn't always mean total failure. For example, when you're sneaking, a GM may ask for a Stealth Test. The circumstances may be so much in your favor that failing the Test won't reveal your location, but it might alert guards to the presence of an intruder.

Instead of outright failing your Test on a failure, the GM will declare that it's a **Fail Forward** Skill Test (e.g., roll a Fail Forward Athletics Test to climb). Failure would result in suffering 1D10+1, 2D10+2, or 3D10+3 Peril, based on the relative challenge and conditions of the Test a GM assigns. However, Critical Failures still have tragic results (such as falling while climbing).

Flip To Succeed

In exceptional cases, you will **Flip To Succeed** in the dice results. Roll your ones and tens dice together, but don't designate which die is which. Instead, compare both outcomes and pick the most favorable result.

Example: *What if Suspirianci could Flip To Succeed in Blackpowder Tests? If she'd rolled 95%, Suspirianci would “flip” the dice, treating it as 59% instead (the better result).*



Flip To Fail

Sometimes, you will be asked to **Flip To Fail** the dice results. Roll your ones and tens dice together, but don't designate which die is which. Instead, compare both outcomes and pick the worst result.

Example: *What if Suspirianci was in a situation that called for her to Flip To Fail on Blackpowder Tests? If she'd rolled 18%, Suspirianci would "flip" the dice, treating it as 81% instead (the worse result).*



Edge Cases: You cannot flip the results of 1% or 100%. Furthermore, if you Flip To Succeed and the situation calls for Flip To Fail, they cancel each other out.

Opposed Tests

When the GM calls for an **Opposed Test** (such as cheating while gambling, capturing a foe during a chase scene, or an Intrigue Check during an intrigue scene), you and the opposing party will Test a Skill against one another. Whoever succeeds in their Test and rolls the highest wins the Opposed Test (the "blackjack" method). Critical Successes immediately win, whereas Critical Failures immediately lose.

Example: *Lyndon Geneveux is playing a game of chance against the infamous Madame Vouvray. To beat her, the GM asks for a (Hard -20%) Opposed Gamble Test. Lyndon has a 36% to succeed and rolls a 35%. Madame Vouvray has a 48% chance to succeed and rolls a 34%. Lyndon won the Opposed Test because he succeeded in his Gamble Test and rolled the highest.*

Narrate The Outcome

Remember: everyone is telling a shared story. Rolling Skill Tests represents a pivotal moment—begin by outlining your desired outcome so everyone understands the stakes. After rolling the dice, interpret the result and narrate the events. Explain your survivor's actions, speech, and thoughts.

Exceptions-Based Mechanics

This is a game of exception-based rules, and effects don't stack. If a fight action, effect, spell, or Talent makes an exception to a core rule, the exception takes precedence. The GM always decides on edge cases.

Size & Time

Personal height and weight are measured in size. Most animals are Small. Humans are Medium, while elephants are Large. Giraffes that wander distant vistas are Huge, whereas the behemoths of the sea hunted for their blubber are Gargantuan.

Building height is measured in storeys. A storey is roughly 15 feet. A tower's height is typically 3 storeys, a castle keep is usually 9 stories, and the stars in the Vault of Night are impossible to measure.

Localized Distances Are Abstracted. In terms of distances, use abstracted terms like Close (up to 5 feet), Near (up to 30 feet), Far (up to 60 feet), and Too Far (beyond 60 feet). This matters the most during combat.

One week is seven days, 28 days is a month, and 336 days are in a calendar year. Human cultures call the days Firstday, Secondday, Thirdday, etc. The months are the Lairs of the Zodiac, named after the 12 constellations that rise closest to the northern star. People mark each of the four festivals as the turn of spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Heavenly bodies make one cycle around the world in one year.

Fortune & Misfortune Coins

When a situation or the dice don't work in your favor, you can call upon a dramatic resource to even the odds with Fortune Coins. Once a session formally starts, players can spend 1 **Fortune Coin** from a shared pool to gain any of these benefits:



Spending Fortune Coins

Change a D6: When you or someone else rolls 1D6, spend 1 Fortune Coin to treat the result as face “6”. However, you cannot spend more than 1 Fortune Coin to change multiple dice into their highest value on the same Turn.

“Edit” the Situation: Suggest a momentary Edit to a situation for the player's advantage or the GM's disadvantage. An Edit allows a player to temporarily take control of the narrative at the GM's discretion. For example, you could find a desperately needed dose of laudanum to heal with. The “rule of cool” follows with Edits; players should try over-the-top, dramatic actions that fit into the story. However, Edits won't prevent you from Afflictions, Injuries, Malignancies, or Scars.

Gain an Action Point: In a fight scene, spend 1 Fortune Coin to gain 1 Action Point (AP) to use immediately. There is no limit to the number of Fortune Coins you can spend to gain AP on the same Turn. AP are found in [Chapter 7: Fight Scenes](#).

Reduce Damage or Peril: Immediately after suffering Damage or Peril, spend 1 Fortune Coin and roll 1D10. Reduce the Damage or Peril you suffered by the value you rolled. If you roll face “10”, roll another 1D10 and add it to the total. There is no cap to the number of face “10s” you can roll. However, you cannot spend more than 1 Fortune Coin to reduce it further on the same Turn.

Re-roll a Skill Test: Immediately after you roll a D100, spend 1 Fortune Coin to re-roll it, but you must accept the results. You cannot spend a Fortune Coin to re-roll a Critical Failure.

Fortune Begets Misfortune

Whenever a player uses a Fortune Coin, it immediately converts into a **Misfortune Coin** and goes into the GM's Misfortune Pool.

The GM may use Misfortune Coins to take advantage of the above benefits for NPCs and creatures they control. Once a GM spends a Misfortune Coin, it transfers back into the players' Fortune Pool as a Fortune Coin.

Resetting Fortune & Misfortune

When the session ends, all Fortune and Misfortune Coins are set aside, and the ritual to determine the Fortune and Misfortune Pools begins anew next season.

Gameplay Rituals

When you start or end a **ZWEIHÄNDER** session, follow these rituals to bookend it:

Starting A Session

All players roll Initiative. The GM needs a formal structure to control the flow, and this game uses an **Always On Initiative** approach. Each player rolls 2D10 and adds it to their survivor's Initiative Modifier (2D10+Initiative Modifier). One player records the results, highest to lowest, on a piece of paper or a marker board called the Initiative Ladder, which is visible to everyone. Fortune and Misfortune Coins cannot be used to modify Initiative.

Set Fortune & Misfortune Session: As a session begins, every player rolls 1D6. For every die that lands on faces "1 to 5", put 1 Fortune Coin into a shared bowl in front of players (the **Fortune Pool**). If it lands on face "6", put 1 Misfortune Coin into a bowl for the GM (the **Misfortune Pool**). The GM then puts 1 free Misfortune Coin into the Misfortune Pool.

Players participate in "Previously on . . ." The GM will kick off a reminder of the last session. Then, players will recap what happened and review their People/Places/Things Cards. Did they make new allies or enemies? Did your survivors unearth a deadly secret? Did any uncomfortable content come up from a previous session you want to omit from future ones? Were there any house rules you wanted to introduce or change?

Ending A Session

At the end of every session, the GM will ask players 3 questions about the session. Based on the answers, you will individually record Reward Points (RP) earned for that session. RP should be spent before a session begins or at the very end of it to Unlock new abilities, as found in **Chapter 4: Professions**.

The Three Questions

Did you show up to the session? **5 RP**

Did you call upon one of your Tragic Flaws **5 RP**

Did you call upon one of your Inner Strengths **5 RP**

The players talk about the session and spend RP.

Guided by the GM, each player goes around the table to briefly chat about how the story impacted their survivor. Did the story lead to new understandings? Did any uncomfortable content come up during the session that they want to omit from future ones? Were there any house rules you wanted to introduce or change? Spend any RP to Unlock abilities.

Finally, plan for the next time you'll gather for the next session!



CHAPTER 3: YOUR LIFEPAATH

Players and the GM should be in the same space to create their survivors. Guided by the GM using Session Zero from **Chapter 11: Game Mastery** you'll spend an hour setting the tone and taking the dice for a test drive.

ZWEIHÄNDER provides the rules of gameplay; worldbuilding is the responsibility of the GM. However, nine fundamental truths will inform your mindset around creating your survivor.

Every player should meet and work together to create their survivors. Print out a survivor sheet for each player from the [Appendix](#) or download it from [DriveThruRPG](#). Everyone will also need a D100, several index cards or scratch paper, 2 paper clips, and a pencil. Set aside an hour to create your survivors.

*Before creating your survivors, take turns reading *The Nine Truths* aloud.*



The First Truth: In the world you know, it is a time in which humanity abounds. Retribution and violence are hallmarks of the world you live in—the stench of venality wafts from every cobbled street and gloomy hillside. You know little of the place beyond where you were raised but have grown accustomed to this harsh reality.

The Second Truth: Elves and other ancestries of the dawn age are mostly extinct. Collectively, these folk are called the Forgotten. Their species come from civilizations that fell long ago and are more extraordinary than humans. The Forgotten have only recently resurfaced in the modern world and seek a place to belong. These outcasts should make great allies if you can earn their trust. Your survivor may even be one of the Forgotten ancestries.

The Third Truth: Cultural identity binds communities together as feudal bastions against the unknown. However, these ties can also construct walls between groups or sow discord from within. Prejudice sometimes manifests between the haves and the have-nots. In your case, it is related to the envy of your betters (or their envy of you).

The Fourth Truth: You pay healthy respect to superstitions and the deities but fear their influence over the future. The three principal gods of humankind are the Learner, the Martyr, and the Steward. Some pray to the Custodian, a dying god who stands at the threshold of the Well of Souls. They even beseech forbidden entities, like the Crouching One, for vengeance. But all recognize the Nightfather's influence over fortune and misfortune. Heed the gods and their warnings.

The Fifth Truth: You accept that the delicate equilibrium of black and yellow bile, blood, and phlegm forms the cornerstone of medicine. To address disease, it is customary to partake in peculiar potions, engage in bizarre rituals, and give homage to rustic barber surgeons who are treated as well as the village parson. You pay “tithes” to these surgeons to treat your maladies and wounds, spiritual or otherwise.

The Sixth Truth: You know that people who practice the “higher mysteries” of magic have either negotiated part of their soul with a godhead or stolen their power. The interwoven threads of the Ethereal Veil keep unfettered magic from seeping into the living world. If you practice magic, your spells must be hidden from the naïve, as they fear it, and from other sorcerers, who seek to steal its secrets from you.

The Seventh Truth: Whether young or old, human or elf, a peasant or a sellsword, you have spent years in your Profession. Your life, shaped by your upbringing, has been relatively conventional. Staying close to your birthplace, you've established strong connections within the community where your skills and trade thrive. But something terrible happened in your recent past.

The Eighth Truth: You faced your doom and died, but somehow reawoke three days later . . . and a new path has been laid before you. This extraordinary experience pulled you away from the life and community you knew and set you down a newer, darker path. You have found other survivors who also faced a near-death experience. Drawn together as a bulwark against the world's cruelty, your stories will be filled with discovery, pain, and catharsis.

The Ninth Truth: As you embark on this new journey, you will encounter situations that challenge your morals and beliefs. Will you rage against the dying of the light as a glimmer of hope? Will you struggle in the morass of compromise? Or will you simply embrace these dark times for opportunistic ends? The answer is not simple but defines what it means to be a survivor.

Lifepath Overview

Your survivor is a mosaic of a strange but compelling mix of traits that may seem at odds as you move through the survivor creation process. Diversity is a strength, and differences between your survivors will create memorable, lasting stories.

Randomly Generated Lifepath

If you are a first-time player of **ZWEIHÄNDER**, we strongly encourage you to randomly generate your survivor, so you can experience how a lifepath system works. If you prefer a more customized build, choose what works best to fit the vision for your survivor:

Step 1: Tier & Ancestry

Step 2: Appearance

Step 3: Attributes

Step 4: Social Class

Step 5: Upbringing

Step 6: Profession

Step 7: Damage & Peril Condition Tracks

Step 8: Initiative Modifier

Step 9: Age

Step 10: Brush With Death

Step 11: First Scar

Step 12: Memento

Step 13: Tragic Flaw & Inner Strength

Step 14: Name & Bond

Step 15: Profession Details & Skills

Step 16: General Talents

Step 17: Weapons & Supplies

Step 18: For Spellcasters

Step 19: Scar Effects & Finalize

Your Birth

Your lot has already been decided by the Nightfather, favoring no person over another.

Step 1: Tier & Ancestry

In **ZWEIHÄNDER**, there are three levels of play called **Tiers**. Each represents your survivor's collective experiences over the course of the story. There are three Tiers: Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced. You begin gameplay in Basic Tier. Learn more in **Chapter 4: Professions**.

Mark on the second page of your survivor sheet that you are in Basic Tier.

ZWEIHÄNDER is humanocentric and cosmopolitan; thus, humans are the default ancestry, and everyone speaks their shared tongue. However, you can also play any of the Forgotten ancestries, those of unique historical and cultural traditions.

Languages: If you are human, you speak Auld (the common tongue) and a cultural tongue your GM will help you define. If you are one of the Forgotten, you know your ancestral tongue and Auld. Learning new languages is handled by the Multilingual Talent in **Chapter 5: General Talents**.

Ancestral Talents: People are individuals but share a uniquely grouped set of traditions passed down from generation to generation. These Ancestral Talents illustrate regional and cultural diversity within their own kind while expressing the differences between the other ancestries. As humanity is the most abundant ancestry in the world, they possess the most significant range of Ancestral Traits.

As time progresses, you will learn more about your ancestry and their place in the world. For now, you will Unlock 1 Ancestral Talent in the Basic Tier and can Unlock new ones at the Intermediate and Advanced Tiers.

Either choose human or roll a D100 to determine your ancestry, then write it on the first page of your survivor sheet. Write your languages down on the second page of your survivor sheet. Roll a D100 on its related table to Unlock 1 Ancestral Talent. Write its name and effects on the second page of your sheet.

D100	Ancestry
1 to 2	Awakened
3 to 4	Dhampyr
5 to 6	Dwarf
7 to 8	Elf
9 to 10	Fane
11 to 12	Firbolg
13 to 14	Gargoyle
15 to 16	Grendel
17 to 86	Human
87 to 88	Midfolk
89 to 90	Selkie
91 to 92	Siabra
93 to 94	Tattertail
95 to 96	Ubasti
97 to 98	Vargr
99 to 100	Woodwose

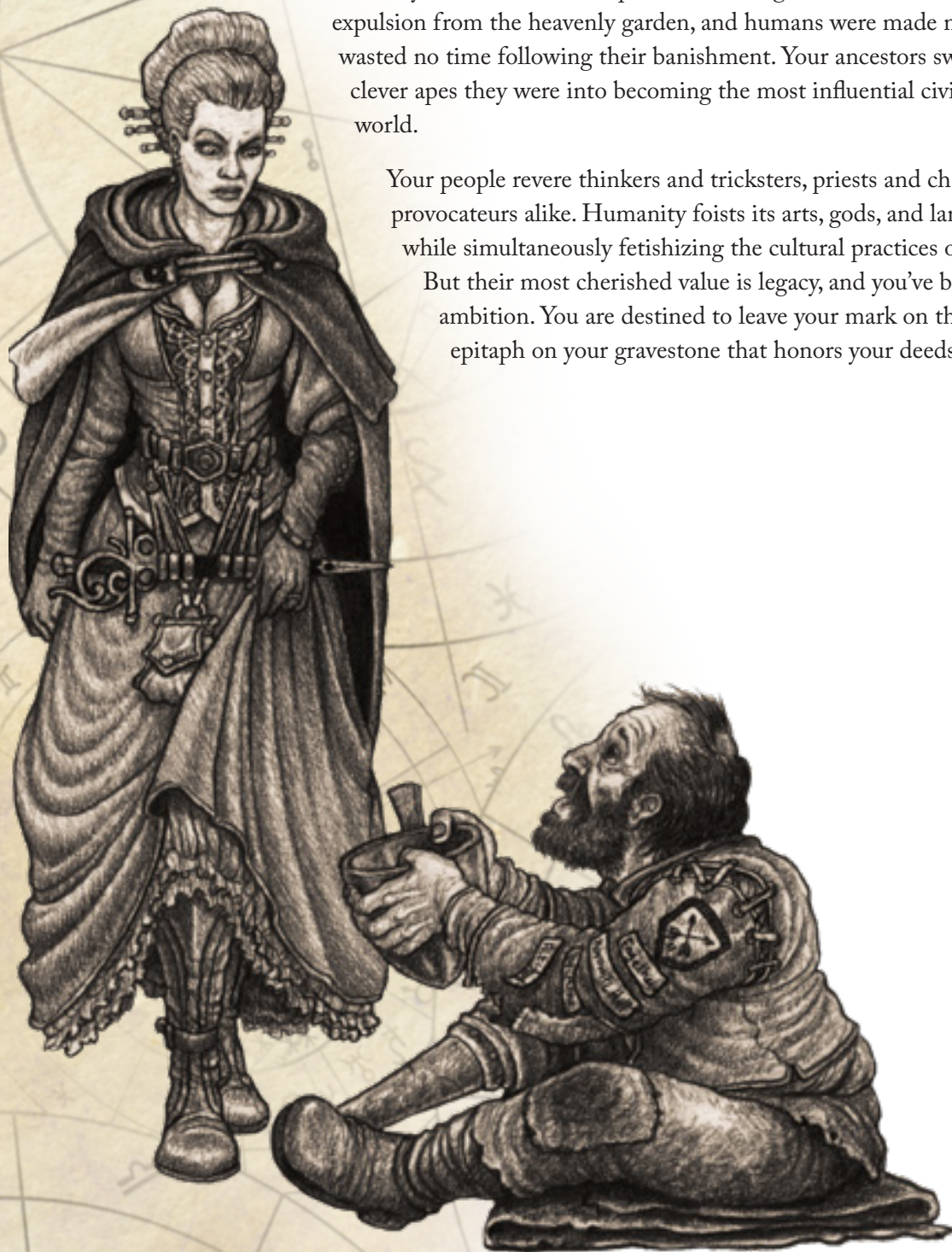


Human

Languages: Auld & cultural tongue

During the dawn era, your forebears' vainglorious nature brought about a time of suffering when they tried to exert their power over the gods but failed. This arrogance led to expulsion from the heavenly garden, and humans were made mortal. However, they wasted no time following their banishment. Your ancestors swiftly evolved from the clever apes they were into becoming the most influential civilization in the known world.

Your people revere thinkers and tricksters, priests and charlatans, politicians and provocateurs alike. Humanity foists its arts, gods, and languages upon each other while simultaneously fetishizing the cultural practices of others it assimilates. But their most cherished value is legacy, and you've been taught to nurture ambition. You are destined to leave your mark on this world. If not? An epitaph on your gravestone that honors your deeds in life will suffice.



D100	Human Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 2	Adventurous Spirit	At the start of a session, flip a coin. If it lands on heads, move one step up the Damage Condition Track.
3 to 4	Ancestral Spellcraft	Choose 1 Petty Spell from Folk Magic. You can Critically Succeed to cast it. This is usable once per day.
5 to 6	Auspicious Birth	Permanently increase your lowest Primary Attribute to 50%.
7 to 8	Birds of a Feather	You add a cumulative +1 to your Initiative Modifier for every survivor in a fight scene.
9 to 10	Blood Bond	Choose one survivor now. When they move one or more steps down the Peril Condition Track, you can suffer in their stead as they ignore it.
11 to 12	Child of Fortune	At the start of a session, flip a coin. If it lands on heads, move 1 Misfortune Coin into the players' Fortune Pool.
13 to 14	Child of the Demiurge	Animalian and Primeval creatures suffer a Hindrance Die to attack you.
15 to 16	Consult the Gods	Spend 2 Fortune Coins and 1 hour in prayer to request guidance from the GM, who may provide an enigmatic clue, a vision, or divine wisdom. You can do this once a day.
17 to 18	Corrupted Soul	When you suffer an Affliction, roll 1D6. If it lands on face "6", optionally ignore it, but you gain 1 Corruption.
19 to 20	Cradled by Fortune	When you spend a Fortune Coin to re-roll a Skill Test and succeed, put it back into the Fortune Pool.
21 to 22	Custodian's Usher	When you move a creature to Dying!, take a Misfortune Coin from the GM and put it into the players' Fortune Pool.
23 to 24	Danger Sense	Creatures cannot take advantage of a Surprise Turn against you.
25 to 26	Derring-do	When you or your allies roll a Critical Success with D100 in a fight scene, gain 1 Action Point.
27 to 28	Devil's Advocate	Beyonder and Corrupted creatures suffer a Hindrance Die to attack you.
29 to 30	Dim sight	You can see in the dark above ground, provided you are not Close to a light source.
31 to 32	Distant Lineage	Choose an Ancestral Talent from a different ancestry.
33 to 34	Do As I Do	At the start of a session, select one Talent you've learned. Your Bonded survivor can take advantage of it as if they had the Talent themselves.
35 to 36	Esoteric Memory	You Flip To Succeed on Insight Tests to recall a detail or fact. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.

D100	Human Ancestral Talent	Effect
37 to 38	Favored by the Nightfather	When you spend a Fortune Coin to re-roll a Skill Test but fail, put it back into the player's Fortune Pool.
39 to 40	Final Countdown	When you are moved to Dying!, gain 3 Action Points and use them now. If you bring that same creature to Dying!, move to Grievously Wounded instead and ignore the Injury you would have gotten.
41 to 42	Forged in Battle	When calculating Damage, add the number of Skill Ranks you have in its related Skill (+1 for 1 Rank, +2 for 2 Ranks, +3 for 3 Ranks) for total Damage.
43 to 44	Fortune's Wheel	Anytime you generate a Critical Failure from rolling D100, add 1 Fortune Coin to the Fortune Pool. Once used, the coin is discarded.
45 to 46	Grim Resolve	After suffering Melee Damage, spend 2 Fortune Coins to completely ignore it. You can do this once a day.
47 to 48	Grotto Sense	You can see in the dark below ground, provided you can smell.
49 to 50	Herald of the Crouching One	Whenever you choose to kill a creature when they're Dying!, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
51 to 52	High Piety	Permanently reduce the Damage you suffer from Beyonders and Supernatural creatures by -3.
53 to 54	I Get By	You can always provide yourself with food and water to live on in urban areas.
55 to 56	Jack of All Trades	When using a Skill you don't possess Skill Ranks in, add +5%.
57 to 58	Justice Nevermore	You cannot be restrained by manacles or rope, nor can you be Grabbed during a fight scene.
59 to 60	Learner's Arbiter	When you interact with non-hostile creatures using Persuasion, gain a Help Die.
61 to 62	Leviathan's Mettle	You can use multiple smelling salts a day without suffering the negative effects.
63 to 64	MacGyver	You can construct any tool that isn't a weapon with materials on hand without fail. After using the tool, roll 1D6. On a face "6", it is destroyed.
65 to 66	Martyr's Progeny	When you move down the Damage Condition Track from magic, you move one less step down (to a minimum of 1).
67 to 68	Miraculous Healing	Whenever you awaken from 6 consecutive hours of sleep, move one step up the Damage Condition Track. You can do this once every day.
69 to 70	Mountain Among Men	Permanently adjust your [BB] by +1, and two-handed Melee weapons can be used as a one-handed weapon instead.
71 to 72	My Fate Is Sealed	When you gain a Scar, flip a coin. If it lands on heads, ignore it.

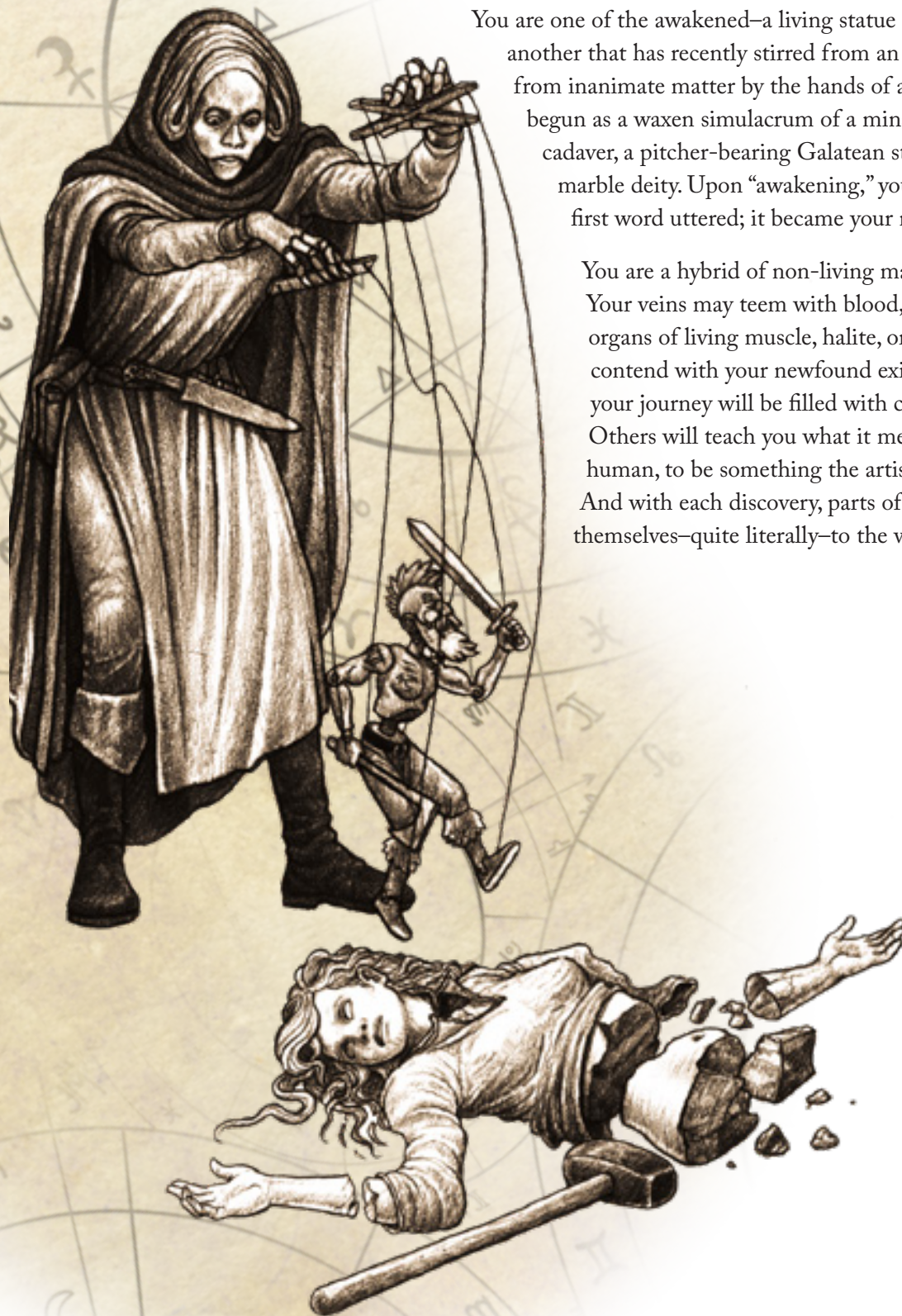
D100	Human Ancestral Talent	Effect
73 to 74	Natural Selection	Permanently adjust one Primary Attribute to 55%.
75 to 76	One Foot in the Grave	After suffering Peril, spend 2 Fortune Coins to completely ignore it.
77 to 78	Preternatural Instinct	Permanently reduce Move Action cost by -1 Action Point (to a minimum of 1 AP).
79 to 80	Rogue Scholar	When another survivor fails an Intelligence-based Skill Test, you may re-roll for them using your abilities without spending a Fortune Coin (but they must accept the outcome).
81 to 82	Scion of the Chain Breaker	When you suffer from a magic effect, spend 2 Fortune Coins to completely ignore it. You can do this once a day.
83 to 84	Seemingly Harmless	In a fight scene, creatures will not target you with Attack Actions or Special Actions on their first Turn.
85 to 86	Servant of the Steward	When you aren't Stressed, Frightened, or Terrified, add +2 to Peril Thresholds.
87 to 88	Seventh Sense	You Flip To Succeed on Awareness Tests to find hidden creatures. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
89 to 90	Shadow Dancer	With a successful Stealth Test, you can disappear entirely from sight, even in front of onlookers. Use 2 Action Points in a fight scene to do so.
91 to 92	Sterner Stuff	When you suffer an Injury, take another Turn.
93 to 94	Survival of the Fittest	When you fail a Resolve Test to resist becoming Stressed, Frightened, or Terrified, temporarily increase your Peril Threshold by +3 while in the vicinity of what provoked it.
95 to 96	Touch of Brimstone	Permanently reduce falling, fire, and magic Damage by -3.
97 to 98	Twist of Fate	When a Fortune or Misfortune Coin is about to be spent, you (as the player) call out, "The Nightfather intervenes!" The effect doesn't occur, and the coin is permanently discarded from both pools until the next game session.
99 to 100	Winter King's Embrace	Gain +5% to attack with Melee weapons and +1 Damage.

Awakened

Languages: Auld and any other ancestral tongue

You are one of the awakened—a living statue sculpted in the image of another that has recently stirred from an eternal slumber. Crafted from inanimate matter by the hands of an artisan, you could have begun as a waxen simulacrum of a minstrel, a vivisectionist's cadaver, a pitcher-bearing Galatean statue, or an outstretched marble deity. Upon "awakening," your creator's name was the first word uttered; it became your namesake.

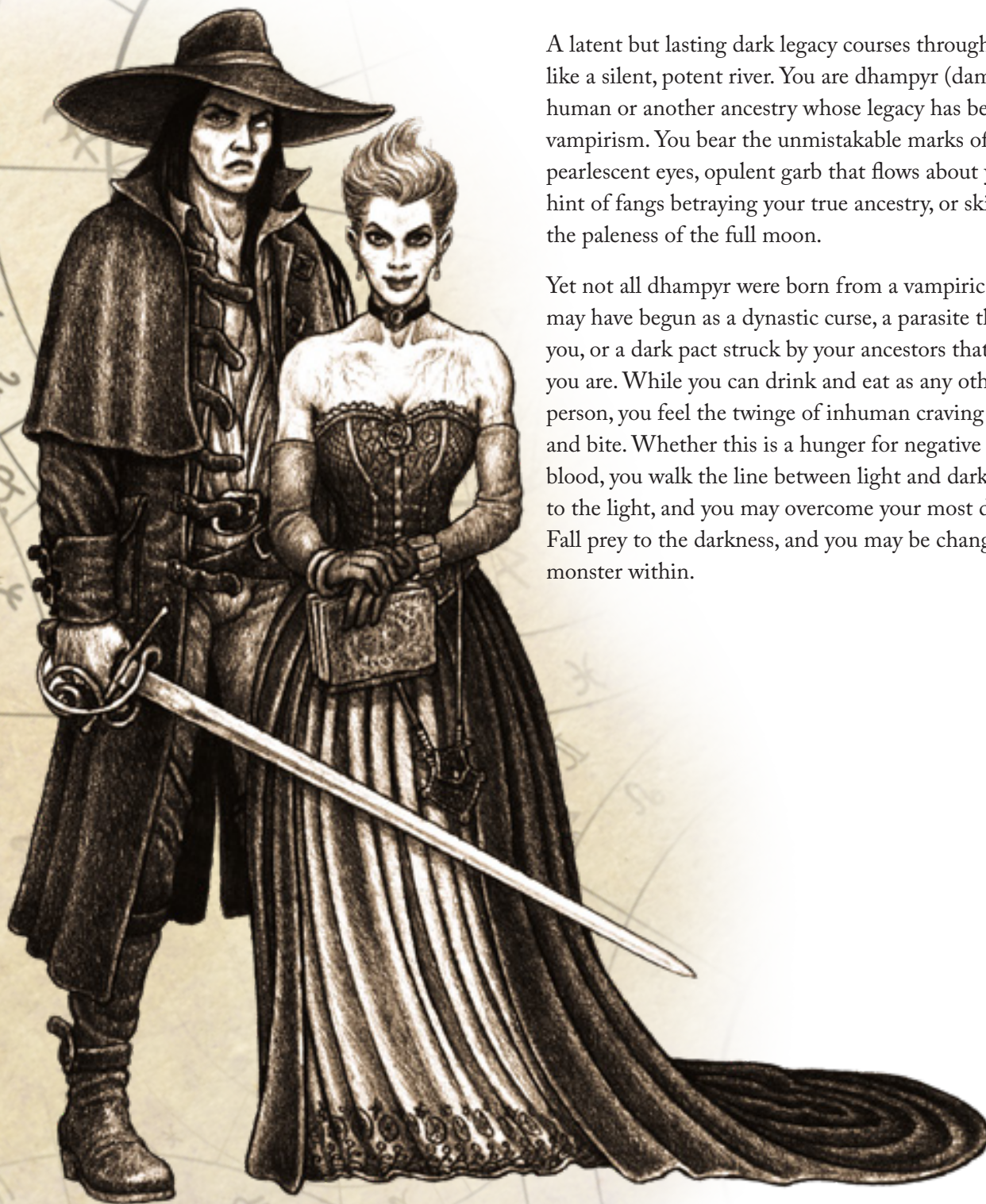
You are a hybrid of non-living material and mortal flesh. Your veins may teem with blood, quicksilver, or salt, with organs of living muscle, halite, or clockwork. As you contend with your newfound existence, it is doubtless that your journey will be filled with curiosity and catharsis. Others will teach you what it means to be alive, to be human, to be something the artisan never intended. And with each discovery, parts of yourself will reveal themselves—quite literally—to the world.



D100	Awakened Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Body of Bronze	You can withdraw your heart from your body for [WB] hours before suffering 3D10+3 Peril every minute after that. The heart casts light as a lantern.
9 to 16	Clay Construct	You don't suffer the ill effects of Peril until you are at -15% To Skill Tests or Exhausted! on the Peril Condition Track.
17 to 25	Clockwork Innards	Once per session, you can choose to Critically Succeed at any one Skill Test.
26 to 33	Iron Giant	Add 1D6 to all Damage, but creatures gain a Help Die to attack you.
34 to 41	Living Sculpture	With a successful Resolve or Toughness Test, you remain perfectly still, resembling a lifelike sculpture. When you succeed, add +3 to Damage Thresholds until you move again. If you do so during a fight scene, you must use 1 Action Point. You can do so for [WB] minutes at a time.
42 to 49	Magical Machine	You Flip To Succeed on Resolve Tests to resist spells. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
50 to 58	Marble Beauty	Spend 1 Fortune Coin to force a creature to resist with an Awareness Test. If they fail, they're Awestruck. While Awestruck, they cannot initiate violence toward you until you initiate violence toward them or their allies.
59 to 67	Quicksilver Innards	When you are Stressed, temporarily add +5% to all Primary Attributes for 1 hour. If Frightened, for 2 hours. If Terrified, for 3 hours. These effects aren't cumulative.
68 to 76	Reanimated Cadaver	When you are moved to Dying!, gain 3 Action Points and use them now. If you bring that same creature to Dying!, move to Grievously Wounded instead and ignore the Injury you would have gotten.
77 to 85	Scarecrow	You can withdraw your brain from your body for [WB] hours before suffering 3D10+3 Peril every minute after that. The brain casts Total Darkness around you like a lantern. You can see perfectly in it.
86 to 92	Steam-powered	When you are at -5% To Skill Tests on the Peril Condition Track, increase your Initiative Modifier by +1. If at -10%, add +2. If at -15%, add +3. These effects aren't cumulative.
93 to 100	Wooden Warrior	You cannot be Disarmed or knocked Prone.

Dhampyr

Languages: Auld and any other ancestral tongue



A latent but lasting dark legacy courses through your veins like a silent, potent river. You are dhampyr (dam-peer), a half-human or another ancestry whose legacy has been tainted with vampirism. You bear the unmistakable marks of your heritage: pearlescent eyes, opulent garb that flows about you, perhaps the hint of fangs betraying your true ancestry, or skin that echoes the paleness of the full moon.

Yet not all dhampyr were born from a vampiric coupling. It may have begun as a dynastic curse, a parasite that lives inside you, or a dark pact struck by your ancestors that made you who you are. While you can drink and eat as any other ordinary person, you feel the twinge of inhuman craving with every sip and bite. Whether this is a hunger for negative emotions or blood, you walk the line between light and darkness. Stay true to the light, and you may overcome your most destructive self. Fall prey to the darkness, and you may be changed into the monster within.

D100	Dhampyr Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Aura of Fear	Whenever you roll a Critical Success with a Skill Test, one creature becomes Stressed.
9 to 16	Bloodline Resilience	You are immune to Diseases and Poisons.
17 to 25	Ethereal Projection	Spend 1 Fortune Coin and 6 consecutive hours sleeping, then roll an Insight Test to speak with a Corrupted or Humanoid creature through their dreams. If you know their true name, gain a Help Die. You can hold an hour-long conversation with them.
26 to 33	Feast of Darkness	Once a session, spend 1 Fortune Coin to move three steps up the Damage or Peril Condition Track.
34 to 41	Inhuman Strength	Permanently adjust your [BB] by +1, and two-handed Melee weapons can be used as a one-handed weapon instead.
42 to 49	Midnight Child	During nighttime hours, you never suffer Peril. During daytime hours, when moving down the Peril Condition Track, you move down one additional step.
50 to 58	Otherworldly Voice	When you succeed at using Taunt in a fight scene or Toughness to intimidate a creature, they also suffer 1D10+[BB] Peril.
59 to 67	Penumbran Origin	You can sense the presence of Supernatural creatures within sight. Alternatively, roll an Insight Test to find Supernatural creatures within a mile of you.
68 to 76	Preternatural Reflexes	When spending a Fortune Coin to reduce Damage from a Melee weapon, roll to Rally allies or Taunt creatures for 0 Action Points.
77 to 85	Twilight Vision	You can see in the dark above ground, provided you are not Close to a light source.
86 to 92	Vampiric Allure	Roll a Guile Test to captivate a Corrupted or Humanoid creature. If it's a Humanoid, gain a Help Die. You can compel them to carry out one command, barring that it doesn't require them to bring harm to themselves. This is usable once per day.
93 to 100	Whispers of the Night	You can speak a myriad of languages associated with owls and night birds. You also have one of these creatures as a companion (<i>small animal</i> with the Minion Template from Chapter 12: Bestiary). Spend 1 Fortune Coin to see through their eyes for 10 minutes. Should it ever suffer Damage, they flee and return to you a day later.

Dwarf

Languages: Delve and Auld

Forged from the world's essences, dwarves possess a chthonic and ever-changing spirit, with plaited hair and beards that trail in their wake. This has led to ridiculous stories about your people, such as how the clans are ruled by half-naked, woad-covered warriors with orange-dyed hair and two axes to grind. While not inherently warlike, this does touch on one of the dwarves' peculiar practices: their lists of grudges.

Your dark-eyed brethren brook no tolerance for foolishness, and neither do you. Each dwarf carries their own list. Once a grievance is recorded, they pursue its settlement with stubborn determination. Once reconciled, they burn the paper and use its ashes to tattoo themselves. This unwavering determination and stubbornness is what led you to a near-death experience. Your ancestral grievances must be set aside if you wish to flourish. As a hammer shapes iron into a sword, your newfound destiny is yours to reforge.



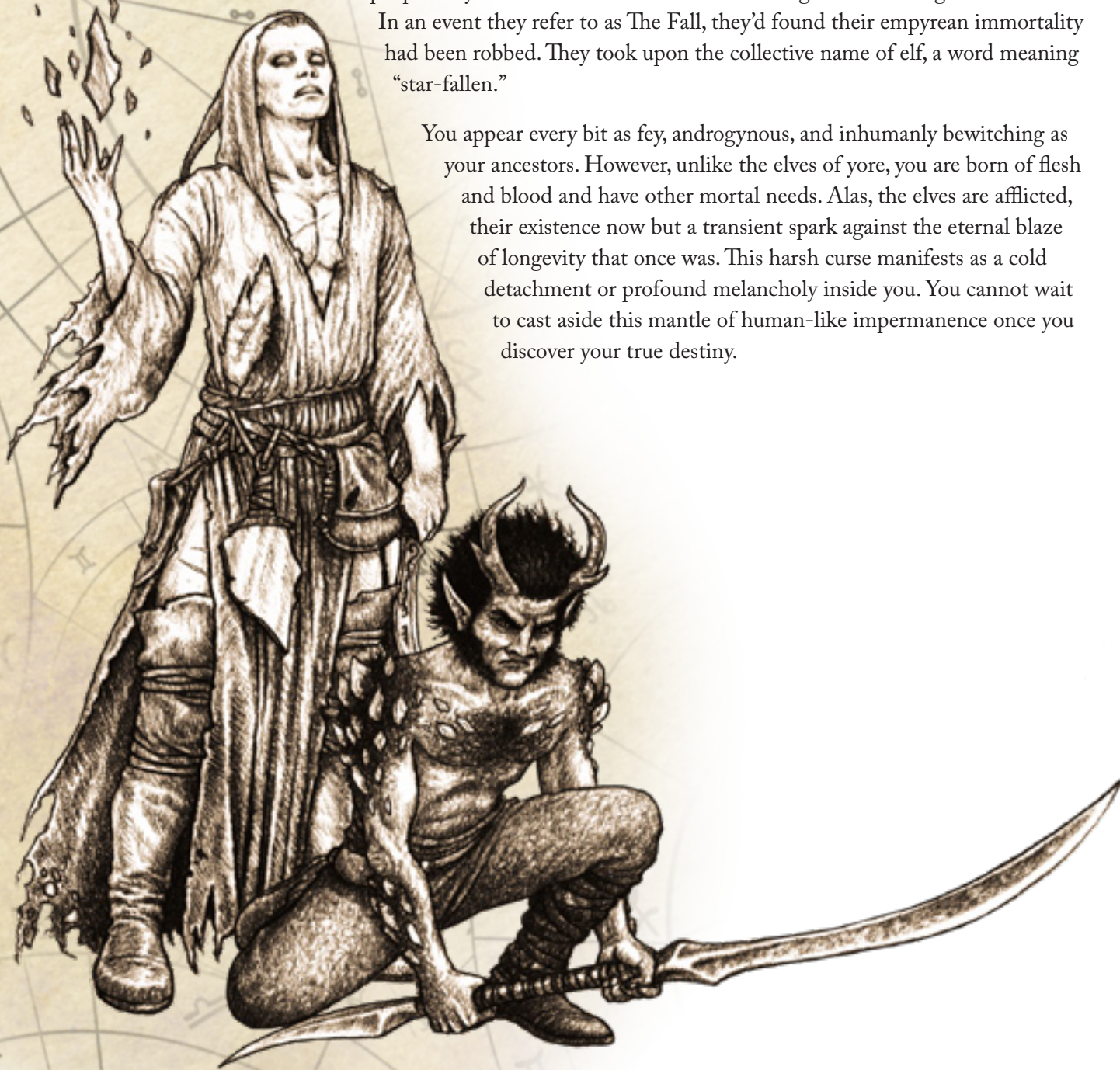
D100	Dwarf Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Cavesight	You can see in the dark below ground, provided you can hear.
9 to 16	Children of the Earth	You cannot be Disarmed or knocked Prone.
17 to 25	Combat Prowess	Permanently adjust your [CB] by +1. You are also immune to the Weaken fight action.
26 to 33	Consume Alcohol	While Drunk, you never suffer from its negative effects.
34 to 41	Dwarven Warfare	When wielding 2 one-handed weapons, gain a Help Die to Attack Actions.
42 to 49	Grudgebearer	When you roll faces “5 to 6” on a Damage die with Melee weapons, roll another 1D6 and add it to the total.
50 to 58	Ironclad	When wearing armor, adjust your Peril Thresholds by +2.
59 to 67	Runemarked Glory	Creatures cannot Critically Succeed in casting spells at you, treating it as a normal success instead. Failed spells cast against you are treated as Critical Failures instead.
68 to 76	Stentorian Voice	Reference [FB] or [BB] to determine how many people you influence with Fellowship-based Skills. You are also immune to the Taunt fight action.
77 to 85	Stoneheaded	You're immune to mind control magic and can see through illusions.
86 to 92	Strength of the Mountain	You can carry up to 6 weapons and 6 tools (instead of the normal limitation of 3).
93 to 100	Unbent & Unbroken	While wearing armor or wielding a weapon or shield, it cannot be destroyed by normal means.

Elf

Languages: Empyrean and Auld

Long ago, majestic beings of light and shadow escaped the elemental prisons within the Vault of Night. Their transcendent, genderless forms occupied an enigmatic form of existence, where reproduction is a matter of Etheric mysticism rather than physicality. As the stars were remade in the first cataclysm, your people's crystal castles fell from the Vault of Night to the living world below. In an event they refer to as The Fall, they'd found their empyrean immortality had been robbed. They took upon the collective name of elf, a word meaning "star-fallen."

You appear every bit as fey, androgynous, and inhumanly bewitching as your ancestors. However, unlike the elves of yore, you are born of flesh and blood and have other mortal needs. Alas, the elves are afflicted, their existence now but a transient spark against the eternal blaze of longevity that once was. This harsh curse manifests as a cold detachment or profound melancholy inside you. You cannot wait to cast aside this mantle of human-like impermanence once you discover your true destiny.



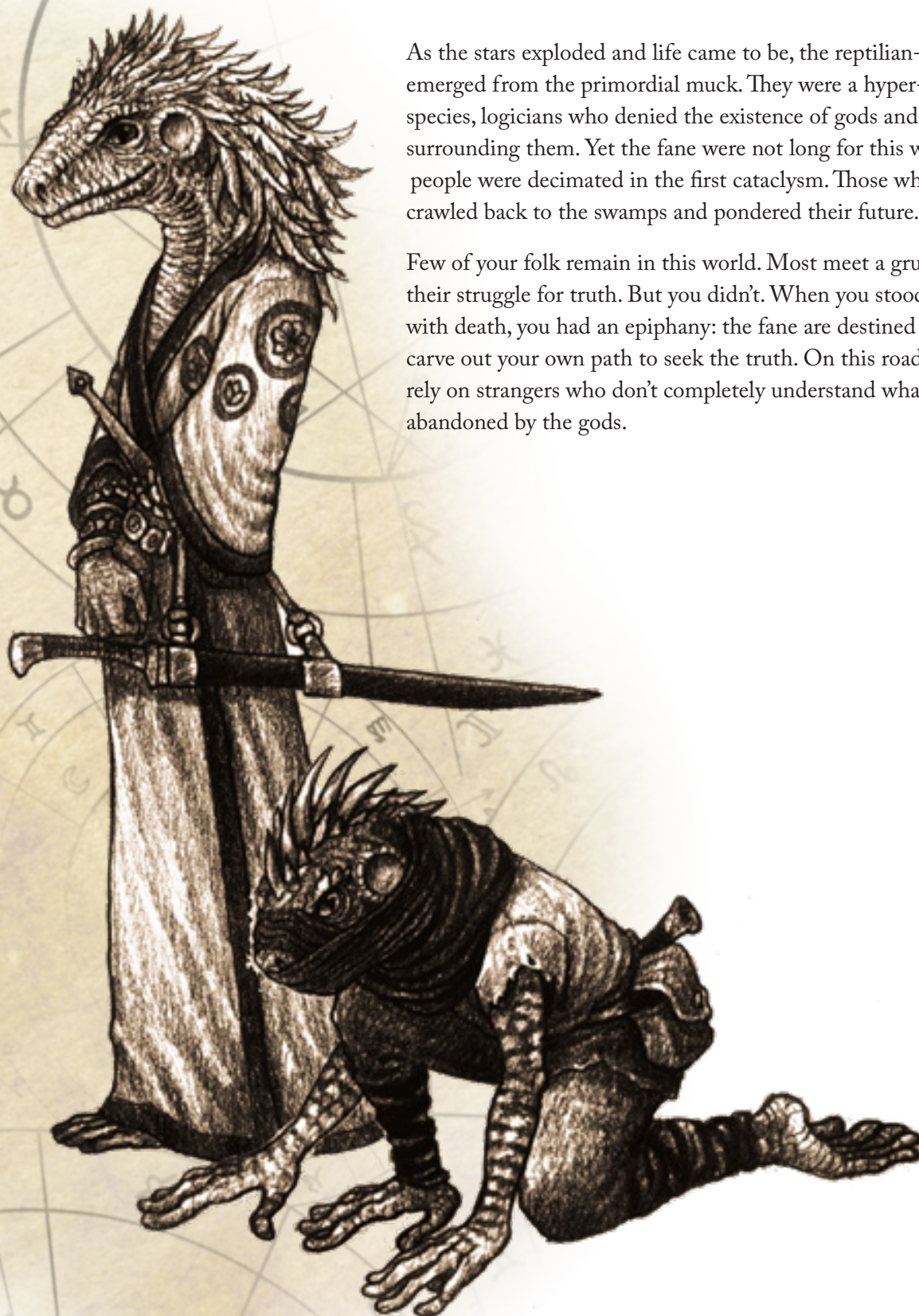
D100	Elf Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Ageless Knowledge	Reference Occultism or Resolve to resist magical effects.
9 to 16	Deadly Aim	Permanently adjust your [AB] by +1. Reduce the Action Points to Load Blackpowder and Ranged weapons by -1 Action Point (to a minimum of 1 AP).
17 to 25	Fey Treachery	When you first deal Damage against a creature in a fight scene, add 1D6 Damage. You can take advantage of this by switching between multiple creatures.
26 to 33	Hand of the Veil	Any weapon you hold is treated as magically enhanced for the purpose of hitting creatures that can only be affected by spells or weapons imbued with magic.
34 to 41	Immortal Blessing	After 1 day of sleep, move one step up the Damage Condition Track.
42 to 49	Lament of the Ages	When a fight scene begins, select one creature. They temporarily reduce the Damage they do to you by your [FB] until the end of the fight.
50 to 58	Meditative State	You only need 3 consecutive hours of sleep to restore your Peril Condition Track. In addition, you are always restored to Fine, even in unsafe places.
59 to 67	Mistwalker	When moving through urban areas, you leave no trace of your passing and cannot be found with magic or Skills.
68 to 76	Nature's Own	When moving through rural areas, you leave no trace of your passing and cannot be found with magic or Skills.
77 to 85	Nighteyes	You can see in the dark above ground, provided there is starlight or moonlight in the sky.
86 to 92	Way of the Bow	When you roll faces "5 to 6" on a Damage die with Ranged weapons, roll another 1D6 and add it to the total.
93 to 100	Wyrdsight	You Flip To Succeed on Insight Tests to sense the presence of magic. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.

Fane

Languages: Saurian and Auld

As the stars exploded and life came to be, the reptilian-like fane (feign) emerged from the primordial muck. They were a hyper-intelligent species, logicians who denied the existence of gods and the miracles surrounding them. Yet the fane were not long for this world, as your people were decimated in the first cataclysm. Those who remained crawled back to the swamps and pondered their future.

Few of your folk remain in this world. Most meet a gruesome end in their struggle for truth. But you didn't. When you stood face-to-face with death, you had an epiphany: the fane are destined to die out. You'll carve out your own path to seek the truth. On this road, you'll need to rely on strangers who don't completely understand what it means to be abandoned by the gods.



D100	Fane Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Amphibious Ancestry	You can see and breathe underwater, provided you are below its surface.
9 to 16	Blend In	With a successful Stealth Test, you can disappear entirely from sight, even in front of onlookers. Use 2 Action Points in a fight scene to do so.
17 to 25	Half-beast	You're immune to mind control magic and can see through illusions.
26 to 33	Cut & Run	When you are moved to Dying!, alternatively break off your tail and move back to Alive. It takes a month for the tail to grow back.
34 to 41	Hide of Scales	When unarmored, add +2 to Damage Thresholds.
42 to 49	Liquid Poise	Reference [AB] or [PB] for your Initiative Modifier. You also cannot be Grabbed in a fight scene.
50 to 58	Monstrous Leap	You can leap up to 1 storey without fail and can drop 2 storeys without suffering falling Damage.
59 to 67	Nimble Undulation	Permanently reduce Move Action cost by -1 Action Point (to a minimum of 1 AP).
68 to 76	Razor-sharp Claws	Gain +5% to attack with Melee weapons and +1 Damage.
77 to 85	Serpentine Fangs	When you Critically Succeed with fight actions, you inject one dose of snake venom into a creature Close by.
86 to 92	Third Eye	You can see in the dark below ground, providing you can hear.
93 to 100	Tongue of Snakes	You can speak a myriad of languages associated with amphibians, reptiles, and snakes. You also have one of these creatures as a companion (<i>small animal</i>) with the Minion Template from Chapter 12: Bestiary . Spend 1 Fortune Coin to see through their eyes for 10 minutes. Should it ever suffer Damage, they flee and return to you a day later.

Firbolg

Languages: Auld and any other ancestral tongue

“Fomorian” is a name used in storybooks to describe befuddled, corrupted brutes who ate humans. Damn the stories, though, that’s not you! You come from a sturdy stock of people called the firbolg (fear-bolg), and just like your ancestors, you have wide shoulders and gravitate toward big stories and larger-than-life experiences. Bright clothing, a celebratory attitude, and crude humor are your hallmarks.

Possessed with insatiable wanderlust, you gravitate towards those who show an inkling of this same spirit for adventure. Despite your strong sense of independence, you have little tolerance for dishonesty. When truth and honor are withheld, you tend to lash out at its perpetrators. Violently. But your fate is not sealed, nor is that of your friends. You’ll smash destiny in the face with your own face if need be!



D100	Firbolg Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Big Folk	Permanently adjust your [BB] by +1, and two-handed Melee weapons can be used as a one-handed weapon instead.
9 to 16	Broad-bellied	When you aren't Starving, add +2 to Peril Thresholds.
17 to 25	Camaraderie	You add a cumulative +1 to your Initiative Modifier for every survivor in a fight scene.
26 to 33	Calloused Body	Reference [CB] or [BB] to determine Melee Damage. You are also immune to the Taunt fight action.
34 to 41	Fomorian Curse	When you suffer an Injury, roll 1D6. If it lands on face "6", ignore it but you gain 1 Corruption.
42 to 49	Frightening Bellow	When you succeed at Toughness Tests to intimidate a creature, they also suffer 1D10+[BB] Peril.
50 to 58	Hunger Pangs	When you succeed at a Resolve Test to resist becoming Stressed, Frightened, or Terrified, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
59 to 67	Leathery Skin	When unarmored, add +2 to Damage Thresholds. You also ignore the Unarmored Quality when not wearing armor.
68 to 76	Mighty Thews	Gain +5% to attack with Melee weapons and +1 Damage.
77 to 85	Overwhelming Grip	When you succeed at Grabbing a creature in a fight scene, they are also knocked Prone.
86 to 92	Rotgut Spray	Use 1 Action Point in a fight scene to inflict 1D10+[BB] fire Damage against a creature Close by you, but you become Drunk.
93 to 100	Vigorous Metabolism	You are immune to Diseases and Poisons.

Gargoyle

Languages: Auld and any other ancestral tongue

Stone towers and cathedrals are decorated with silent, looming grotesques and chimeras of limestone. Some whisper that these statues were once human, turned to stone for their sins. Unfortunately, you are one of these cursed beings. Not every gargoyle is hewn from the same slab. Some of your kin turn to stone as they sleep. Others escaped these age-old constraints, able to walk in daylight or soar overhead upon leathery wings.

You used to walk among humanity unnoticed, betraying your identity only when you shrugged off your cloak or by the rustling of your stunted wings. Were you a vigilant guardian of the city, prowling the darkness to confront those who posed a threat? Or did you live in disguise as a simple peasant, silently working and returning to the rooftops as the sun set? Either way, your life changed the day your rookery was demolished. But a new path is laid before you; it's time to contend with the curse that turned you into a gargoyle. Perhaps there's a way to become human again.



D100	Gargoyle Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Chimeric Facade	You never grow hungry and only need to sleep for 3 hours to recover your Peril Condition Track to Fine. However, you cannot use laudanum or smelling salts, and a healer must substitute Craft to move you up the Damage & Peril Condition Tracks.
9 to 16	Crumbling Grotesque	When you suffer an Injury, roll 1D6. If it lands on face “6”, ignore it but you gain 1 Corruption.
17 to 25	Dark Flight	Spend 1 Fortune Coin to fly for up to 1 hour. If you suffer Damage or Peril during this time, you must succeed on a Resolve Test, or you fall.
26 to 33	Ethereal Innards	You always succeed on Skill Tests to resist Peril caused by physical activities.
34 to 41	Fend off Evil	Corrupted and Supernatural creatures suffer a Hindrance Die to attack you.
42 to 49	Fleshcage	During the daytime, you can change your form between a gargoyle and a human. However, you revert to your gargoyle form when night falls.
50 to 58	Horrific Claws	Gain +5% to attack with Melee weapons and +1 Damage.
59 to 67	Limestone Body	When rolling D100 to determine which Affliction you suffer, roll three times and choose the preferred result.
68 to 76	Mind's Eye	You're immune to mind control magic and can see through illusions.
77 to 85	Monstrous Body	Permanently adjust your [BB] by +1, and two-handed Melee weapons can be used as a one-handed weapon instead.
86 to 92	Rooftop Prowler	Permanently reduce falling, fire, and magic Damage by -3.
93 to 100	Turn to Stone	Spend 1 Fortune Coin to turn entirely to stone, in a hibernative state, for up to 6 hours. You cannot be harmed by normal weapons during this time, and move one step up the Peril Condition Track for every hour you're in this state.

Grendel

Languages: Bray and Auld

Yours are a satyr-like people who straddle the line between a cult of personality and a force of jackanapes. Eeking out an existence on the fringes of society, your people revel in vice and ritual. Living in communes called a “wild hunt,” they attract like-minded folk who escaped the trappings of civilized life. The wild hunt is constantly in a belladonic haze. And it’s because of their blissful ignorance that you left.

In the depths of a hallucination, you saw your own death. You engaged in a psychic battle with your shadow self, barely surviving. But the grendel of the commune either didn’t believe you or couldn’t understand its meaning. In those same visions, you saw others who had to confront their own doom. These companions can help you navigate the dark reveries. With them, it is time to form a new wild hunt: one that’ll take on the world.



D100	Grendel Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Animal Magnetism	Animalian and Humanoid creatures suffer a Hindrance Die to attack you.
9 to 16	Calming Disposition	Whenever other allies can see you, they gain +1 to Damage and a Help Die to resist the effects of becoming Stressed, Frightened, and Terrified.
17 to 25	Half-Beast	Permanently reduce Move Action cost by -1 Action Point (to a minimum of 1 AP).
26 to 33	Lamb to the Slaughter	When you move a creature to Dying!, take advantage of an Opportunity for 0 Action Points.
34 to 41	Mender's Hands	Gain a Help Die when you roll Leechcraft Tests. In addition, you move a creature one additional step up the Damage Condition Track when Binding Wounds.
42 to 49	Musky Odor	When you deal Damage with a Melee weapon, and the creature moves two or more steps down the Damage Condition Track, they begin their next Turn with 1 less AP.
50 to 58	Nature's Wisdom	When you fail an Awareness or Handling Test, you may re-roll it but must accept the results. Ignore Peril Condition Track penalties associated with these two Skills.
59 to 67	One With Nature	You always succeed on Skill Tests to resist Peril caused by physical activities.
68 to 76	Rear Up	When you deal Damage with a Melee weapon, and the creature moves two or more steps down the Damage Condition Track, they are knocked Prone.
77 to 85	Urban Ways	You Flip To Succeed on Stealth Tests in urban areas. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
86 to 92	War Bray	When you Taunt in a fight scene, creatures also reduce their Initiative by -3.
93 to 100	Way of the Wild	You Flip To Succeed on Stealth Tests in rural areas. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.

Midfolk

Languages: Hobb-talk and Auld



The blessed offspring of the forest settled into human society in the middle of the current era (thus their namesake). Living in large pastoral communities called a hobb, the midfolk strive to live in natural harmony with the world around them. They ingratiate themselves with one another to support the greater good.

Like the bees they raise, midfolk work together in colonies, each having their own duties. While its farmers keep the apiaries and the farms, the irregulars protect the hobb, and the elected reeve decides the fate of the hobb.

A collectivist mindset is nearly inexorable to your very being. But for all of your family's communal sensibilities and friendliness, you are different. Back at the hobb, you met with a wandering oracle. They foretold the way you were going to die. On the road, you faced your doom but were somehow pulled out of its way, surviving. You now seek out the truth and will catalog your journey for future generations.



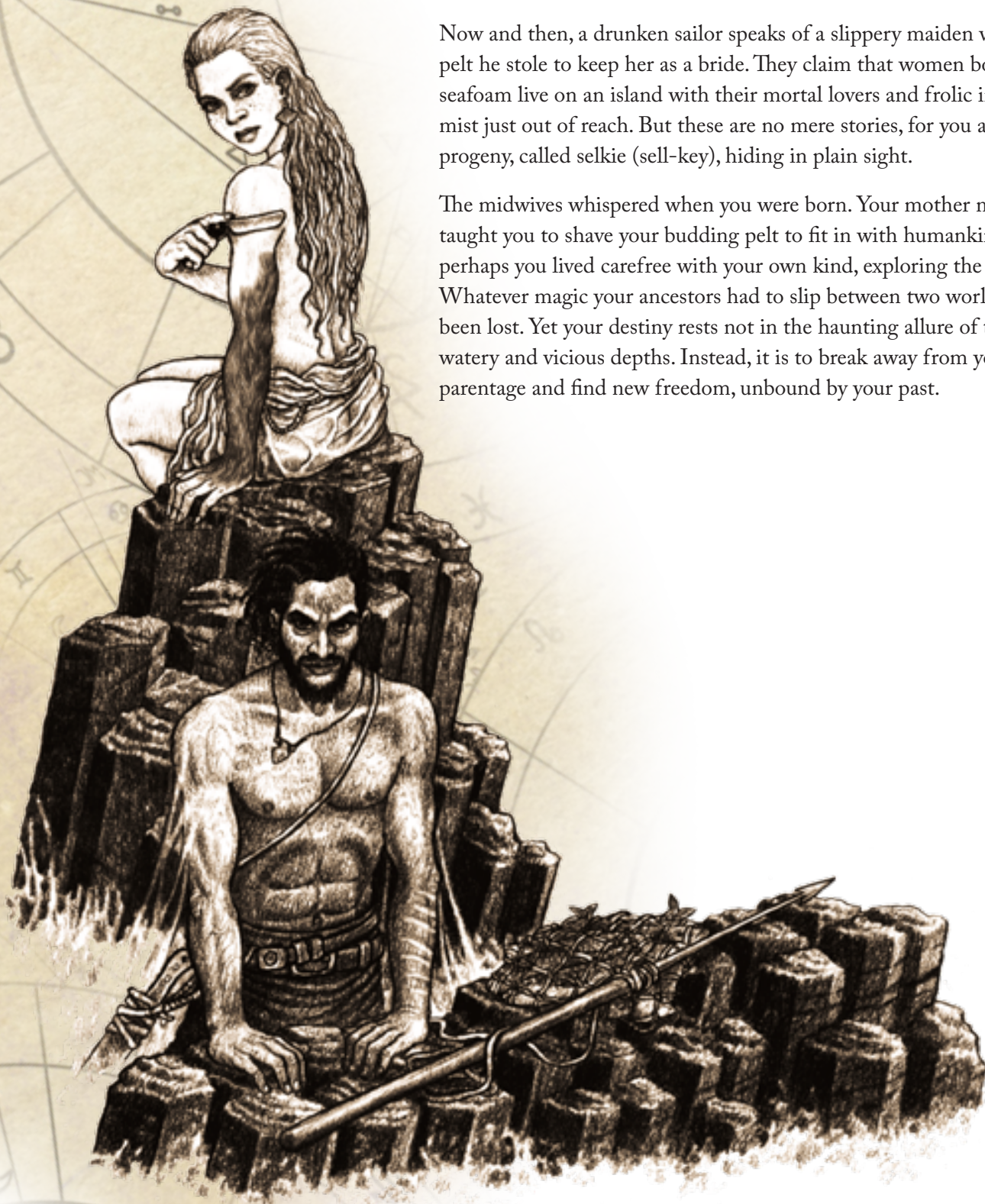
D100	Midfolk Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Bend Like a Reed	Reference [BB] or [FB] to determine your Damage Thresholds. You are also immune to the Taunt fight action.
9 to 16	Cat-like Reflexes	Once per session, you can completely ignore one instance of falling Damage.
17 to 25	Chaos is a Ladder	Whenever you or another survivor you can see Critically Fails a Skill Test in a fight scene, gain 1 Action Point that must be spent now.
26 to 33	Craven	When creatures use Attack Actions with weapons against you, they must roll twice, taking the worst result.
34 to 41	Deep Sleeper	You only need 3 consecutive hours of sleep to restore your Peril Condition Track. In addition, you are always restored to Fine, even in unsafe places.
42 to 49	Farsight	You never suffer penalties to your Skills at Far distances, and gain a Help Die.
50 to 58	Fieldwarden	Gain +5% to attack with Ranged weapons and +1 Damage.
59 to 67	Fleet-footed	Permanently reduce Move Action cost by -1 Action Point (to a minimum of 1 AP).
68 to 76	Humble Beginnings	When you fail a Folklore or Handling Test, you may re-roll it but must accept the results. Ignore Peril Condition Track penalties associated with these two Skills.
77 to 85	Low Blow	When you deal Damage with a Melee weapon, and the creature moves two or more steps down the Damage Condition Track, they are knocked Prone.
86 to 92	Rational Mind	You're immune to mind control magic and can see through illusions.
93 to 100	Well-fed	You can always find food and water to survive in rural areas.

Selkie

Languages: Auld and any other ancestral tongue

Now and then, a drunken sailor speaks of a slippery maiden whose pelt he stole to keep her as a bride. They claim that women born from seafoam live on an island with their mortal lovers and frolic in the mist just out of reach. But these are no mere stories, for you are their progeny, called selkie (sell-key), hiding in plain sight.

The midwives whispered when you were born. Your mother may have taught you to shave your budding pelt to fit in with humankind, or perhaps you lived carefree with your own kind, exploring the waves. Whatever magic your ancestors had to slip between two worlds has been lost. Yet your destiny rests not in the haunting allure of the sea's watery and vicious depths. Instead, it is to break away from your parentage and find new freedom, unbound by your past.



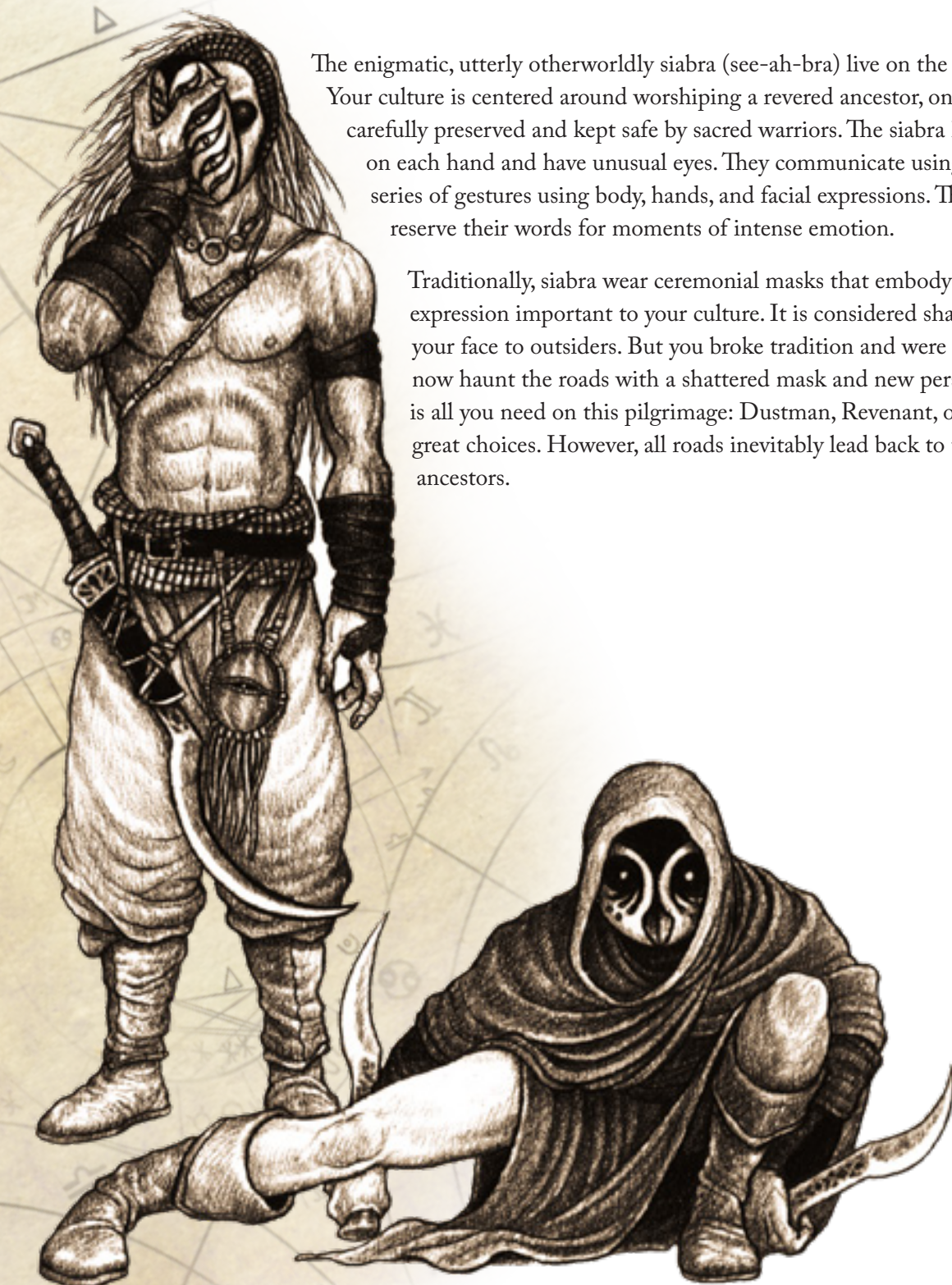
D100	Selkie Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Born from Salt	When you would gain a Scar, flip a coin. If it lands on heads, ignore it.
9 to 16	Brineheart	You ignore the effects of all mental-based Peril. When using Fellowship or Willpower-based Skills, ignore the negative effects of your Peril Condition Track.
17 to 25	Child of the Foam	You Flip To Succeed Persuasion Tests to interact with aquatic creatures. You also never fail Skill Tests to swim or hold your breath.
26 to 33	Deepblood	When immersed in water, you can change your form into a seal or selkie. However, you revert to your selkie form when on dry land.
34 to 41	Empathic Bond	Spend 1 Fortune Coin and 1 hour to move [FB] allies one step up the Peril Condition Track.
42 to 49	Eyes of the Underdepths	You can see in the dark below water, provided you are immersed in it.
50 to 58	Friend to Animals	You can speak a myriad of languages associated with marine birds and seals. You also have one of these creatures as a companion (<i>small animal</i> with the Minion Template from Chapter 12: Bestiary). Spend 1 Fortune Coin to see through their eyes for 10 minutes. Should it ever suffer Damage, they flee and return to you one day later.
59 to 67	Saltborne	Adjust your Peril Thresholds by +3, but this does not stack with other Talents.
68 to 76	Seal Skin	Permanently add +1 to all Damage Thresholds.
77 to 85	Silken Voice	You Flip To Succeed Persuasion Tests to charm Corrupted and Humanoid creatures. You can also perfectly mimic the voice of any sea animal you've met.
86 to 92	Song of the Sea	Spend 1 minute to sing the Song of the Sea. You and all allies who can hear you move a number of steps up the Peril Condition Track equal to [FB]. This is usable once a day.
93 to 100	Well-dipper	Spend 1 hour and roll an Insight Test to speak to any body of water that must be deeper than your waist. The water will answer any questions posed truthfully. The spirit will answer 6 general questions about its history, length, or use, such as those who've passed along it, forded it, and otherwise. Answers are always framed as yes/no, with one splash for "yes" and two for "no."

Siabra

Languages: Stillsign and Auld

The enigmatic, utterly otherworldly siabra (see-ah-bra) live on the fringes of society. Your culture is centered around worshiping a revered ancestor, one who has been carefully preserved and kept safe by sacred warriors. The siabra have three fingers on each hand and have unusual eyes. They communicate using “stillsign,” a series of gestures using body, hands, and facial expressions. The siabra carefully reserve their words for moments of intense emotion.

Traditionally, siabra wear ceremonial masks that embody a single expression important to your culture. It is considered shameful to reveal your face to outsiders. But you broke tradition and were exiled for it. You now haunt the roads with a shattered mask and new persona. A new name is all you need on this pilgrimage: Dustman, Revenant, or Silencio are great choices. However, all roads inevitably lead back to the will of your ancestors.



D100	Siabra Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Mask of Apprehension	Reduce all Peril you suffer by -3.
9 to 16	Mask of Contempt	Select one creature who can see you in a fight scene. They Flip To Fail attacks against you until they are defeated. You can select another creature once the current one is defeated.
17 to 25	Mask of Delight	When a fight scene begins, you always benefit from a Surprise Turn.
26 to 33	Mask of Fear	Select one creature who can see you in a fight scene. They become Frightened. You can select another creature once the current one is defeated.
34 to 41	Mask of Fury	When you roll faces “5 to 6” on a Damage die with Ranged weapons, roll another 1D6 and add it to the total.
42 to 49	Mask of Guilt	You are immune to Diseases and Poisons.
50 to 58	Mask of Intrigue	Once per session, force a creature to resist with an Awareness Test. If they fail, the creature drops to the bottom of the Initiative Ladder and loses 2 Action Points on their next Turn.
59 to 67	Mask of Influence	After suffering Peril, all other survivors who can see you move one step up the Peril Condition Track. This is usable once per day.
68 to 76	Mask of Revulsion	When a creature first moves Close by you, they must succeed on a Resolve Test or Flip To Fail their next Skill Test against you.
77 to 85	Mask of Sabotage	When you roll faces “5 to 6” on a Damage die with Melee weapons, roll another 1D6 and add it to the total.
86 to 92	Mask of Shame	You Flip To Succeed on Awareness Tests to find hidden creatures. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
93 to 100	Mask of Sorrow	When a creature first moves Close by you, it must succeed on a Resolve Test or move one step down the Peril Condition Track. This can be used on multiple creatures.

Tattertail

Languages: Chitterchat and Auld

Contrasting with the widespread belief of your kind being an unkempt, rat-like people, you and your kin are meticulously well-groomed and carry a noble bearing. Tattertail society operates within a complex, feudal framework upheld by a system of dynastic marriages and internal power struggles. A mark of your aristocratic status is the ceremonial removal of one's tail upon adulthood, in a rite known as the Shearing. Those who retain their tails are viewed as crude and defying norms.

Despite the stories, your dwellings are not in nests of the sewers but rather in lofty, forgotten towers and dilapidated estates. It is from these heights where Tattertail society masterminds their rise to power, subtly bending humans to their will as unseen rulers and influential figures. However, when diplomacy fails, Tattertail assassins step in to ensure that the desires of the elite are realized. Few as your people may be, you have broken free of these machinations of the Tattertail to make your own future. You will not be trapped by this orchestration of violence.



D100	Tattertail Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Cloak & Dagger	Gain +5% to attack with Melee weapons and +1 Damage.
9 to 16	Dynastic Scion	Increase any two Secondary Attribute Modifiers by +1.
17 to 25	Nose for Danger	You Flip To Succeed on Awareness Tests to find hidden creatures. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
26 to 33	Prehensile Tail	You don't have to use Action Points to swap tools or weapons in a fight scene. You can carry 1 additional weapon or tool.
34 to 41	Servile Appearance	In a fight scene, creatures will not target you with Stunts or Special Actions on their first Turn.
42 to 49	Shadow Diplomacy	You Flip To Succeed on Guile Tests for acts of diplomacy. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
50 to 58	Skitter Away	When you move to Exhausted!, flip a coin. If it lands on heads, move to -15% To Skill Tests instead.
59 to 67	Slim Wrists	You cannot be restrained by manacles or rope, nor can you be Grabbed during a fight scene.
68 to 76	Slow Mutation	When you suffer an Affliction, roll 1D6. If it lands on face "6", ignore it but you gain 1 Corruption.
77 to 85	Upper Crust	Reference [BB] or [FB] to determine your Damage Thresholds. You are also immune to the Taunt fight action.
86 to 92	Web of Intrigue	You're immune to mind control magic and know when a Corrupted or Humanoid creature is lying.
93 to 100	Whiskersight	You can see in the dark above ground, provided you can smell.

Ubasti

Languages: Auld and any other ancestral tongue

There was once a place of golden oceans of sand. Its oasis people worshiped a pantheon of animalian gods and were ruled by priest-kings. But they desired nothing more than to be revered as deities themselves. So, in their hubris, they created your ancestors: clever, human-like, feline people called ubasti (ooo-bah-stee). This rebellious act led to a war that bathed the realm in a deluge of fire, turning seas of sand into black glass. The ubasti disappeared into the annals of history.

While the ubasti inevitably met their doom, you escaped with your first life. Reborn on strange shores in the modern age, new-found humanity awoke inside you. You are plagued with strange visions of the past, delivered by your makers, that say the undying priest-kings will never be satisfied until your spirit is extinguished. Pray for mercy or be prepared for death, as their headsmen will be waiting at the crossroads to collect your remaining eight lives.



D100	Ubasti Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Blue-blooded	Gain +5% to attack with Ranged weapons and +1 Damage.
9 to 16	Cat Scratch Fever	When you move a creature down the Damage Condition Track, it suffers 1D10+[FB] Peril.
17 to 25	Feline Orientation	Treat falling Damage as Peril instead.
26 to 33	Hunter & Prey	Choose one of these environments: rural or urban. When in your environment, gain an additional 1D10 to your Initiative rolls.
34 to 41	Jinx	Creatures cannot spend Misfortune Coins to re-roll Skill Tests against you.
42 to 49	Mind Power	You're immune to mind control magic and can see through illusions.
50 to 58	Nine Lives	When you move to Dying!, flip a coin. If it lands on heads, move to Grievously Wounded instead.
59 to 67	Saber-toothed	Gain +5% to attack with Melee weapons and +1 Damage.
68 to 76	Sight Beyond Sight	You don't suffer Hindrance Dice for attacking at Far distances or in Dim Light.
77 to 85	Survival Instincts	You always find enough food and water to survive on your own.
86 to 92	Thunder Cat	When you Charge, you cannot be targeted by Blackpowder or Ranged weapons until the start of your next Turn.
93 to 100	Without Bounds	You can leap up to 1 storey without fail, and can drop 2 storeys without suffering falling Damage.

Vargr

Languages: Aroo and Auld

In the untamed wilds of the first era, your lineage was born from the union of humankind and wolf-gods. The vargr (var-gur) are hirsute children of the forest. Your people forged a life of solitude, away from the scornful eyes of civilization, embracing the savage beauty of their nature. But human fear led to the near-extinction of your kind.

As one of the last surviving vargr, you are a living testament to the resilience of your wolvern people. In your heart burns the spirit of your ancestors, a flame that guides you through the darkest nights. Though few still live, your kin are bound by an unspoken pact of loyalty and survival, thriving on the fringes of society. The world sees you as an outsider and a creature of superstition and sanguinity.

Your journey to find your fate will teach you to embrace your unique heritage in a world reluctant to accept you.



D100	Vargr Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Apex Predator	Animalian and Humanoid creatures suffer a Hindrance Die to attack you.
9 to 16	Bare Your Teeth	When you successfully use Taunt against creatures, they also become Stressed.
17 to 25	Feral Intuition	When a fight scene begins, you always benefit from a Surprise Turn.
26 to 33	Howl to the Ancestors	When a Fortune or Misfortune Coin is about to be spent, you (as the player) howl aloud. The effect doesn't occur, and the coin is permanently discarded from both pools until the next game session.
34 to 41	Leader of the Pack	When you successfully use Rally, [FB] allies add +2 Damage until the end of the fight.
42 to 49	Lick Your Wounds	Once a session, spend 1 Fortune Coin to move three steps up the Damage or Peril Condition Track.
50 to 58	Lone Wolf	At the end of a fight, move one step up the Damage & Peril Condition Tracks.
59 to 67	Moonlight Eyes	You can see in the dark above ground, provided the moon or stars aren't hidden.
68 to 76	Pack Hunter	Whenever other allies can see you, everyone gains +1 to Damage, and a Help Die to resist the effects of spells and Stunts.
77 to 85	Shadow's Own	You Flip To Succeed on Stealth Tests in rural areas. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
86 to 92	Warg-blooded	When you are Seriously Wounded, Grievously Wounded, or Dying!, add +3 to Damage Thresholds.
93 to 100	Wilder's Embrace	Move one step up the Damage Condition Track upon awakening after 1 day of sleep.

Woodwose

Languages: Empyrean and Auld

When the elven sanctuaries came crashing down over the living world, their servants fled into the wilderness. The ancestral woodwose (woodwoze) established a new home betwixt the underroot. Having spent so much time within the trees, their growth stunted, and their skin turned bark-like. Throughout the ages, your kin have moved like shadows among the trees, their existence as quiet as the rustling of leaves.

Your people have only recently emerged from the reaches of primeval groves. Tales of the woodwose' origins are many, often speaking of defiance against the elves in a time since forgotten. But with skin as tough as the heart of an oak and a will of sharpened stone, the re-emergence of your people compels you to take destiny into your own hands. It is time to step out of the roots and into the light to spread your limbs.



D100	Woodwose Ancestral Talent	Effect
1 to 8	Bloody Glee	When you move a creature to Dying!, take a Misfortune Coin from the GM and put it into the player's Fortune Pool.
9 to 16	Cragborn Intuition	When you deal Damage with a weapon, gain 1 Action Point to use on any Move Action on the same Turn.
17 to 25	Denizen of the Root	Spend 1 Fortune Coin to turn entirely to bark, in a hibernative state, for up to 6 hours. You cannot be harmed by normal weapons during this time, and move one step up the Peril Condition Track for every hour you're in this state.
26 to 33	Escape Artist	You Flip To Succeed on Coordination Tests to avoid being restrained and Grabbed. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
34 to 41	Roll With It	When rolling D100 to determine which Injury you suffer, roll three times and choose the preferred result.
42 to 49	Rule of Three	When you spend a Fortune Coin to re-roll a Skill Test and fail, roll one more time (but must accept the results).
50 to 58	Sharp Practice	You Flip To succeed on Guile Tests to tell lies. When you succeed, move one step up the Peril Condition Track.
59 to 67	Skeleton Key	Providing you can narratively justify it, you can substitute any Primary Attribute instead of another when making a Skill Test.
68 to 76	Squatling	Creatures Flip To Fail to use Ranged weapons against you.
77 to 85	Tirade of Misery	When you Taunt against creatures in a fight scene, they also reduce their Initiative by -3.
86 to 92	Tunnel Vision	You can see in the dark below ground, provided you are able to use your hands freely.
93 to 100	Underfoot	Permanently adjust your [AB] by +1. You also cannot be Blinded in a fight scene.

Step 2: Appearance

ZWEIHÄNDER is populated by a diverse, rich panoply of people of different body types, ethnicities, and identities. These markers have zero bearing on game mechanics and story. Forgotten ancestries may also have very different considerations for appearances. If the results don't align with how you see your survivor, change them as you wish or create your own descriptors.

Pick a gender that best describes your survivor's identity. Then, roll a D100 to determine your build and a distinguishing mark. Write all these values on the first page of your survivor sheet.

D100	Build
1 to 15	Frail
16 to 30	Slender
31 to 70	Average
71 to 85	Athletic
86 to 100	Stout



D100	Distinguishing Mark	D100	Distinguishing Mark
1 to 3	Albino complexion with jet-black hair	51 to 53	Metal plate on my skull that bulges out at times
4 to 7	Blackpowder shot wound on my face	54 to 56	Near imperceptible glowing symbol in the center of my forehead
8 to 11	Bloodshot eyes that sometimes weep blood	57 to 59	Perfect teeth encrusted with tiny jewels
12 to 14	Brands on my wrists from heresy	60 to 62	Piercing blue eyes that chill others to the bone
15 to 17	Calloused hands with knuckles covered in scars	63 to 65	Prominent blue veins
18 to 20	Colored glass eye that I can change out	66 to 68	Scar in the shape of a star across my face
21 to 23	Dark purple birthmarks	69 to 71	Severely burned skin, revealing bone below
24 to 26	Deep crescent scar across my face	72 to 74	Shock of white hair that stands up
27 to 29	Different-colored eyes that shift in daylight	75 to 77	Six-fingered hand that I constantly flex
30 to 32	Distinct vitiligo complexion that marks me as a rare beauty	78 to 80	Strangely shimmering hair that moves with an unseen wind
33 to 35	Fierce undercut with a tattooed head	81 to 83	Streaks of colored hair that draw others to touch it
36 to 38	Freckles that form a strange pattern on my face	84 to 86	Tattoo-covered body from head to toe
39 to 41	Glasgow smile that ripples up to my cheeks	87 to 89	Thousand-yard stare that could pierce a mountain
42 to 44	Gold-capped teeth	90 to 93	Three vertical red brands on my chin
45 to 47	Intricate braid that holds small charms	94 to 97	Two missing fingers replaced with silver and gold prostheses
48 to 50	Lichtenberg scar across my body	98 to 100	Well-manicured appearance and pleasant smell

Your Life

You spent a good part of your life toiling away. It may not have been peaceful, but it made you a living.

Step 3: Attributes

Attributes represent all creatures' raw physical, mental, and social capabilities.

Primary Attributes

At this stage of creation, they range in numeric values between 32% to 50%. Your Profession will further adjust these values. The higher the value, the more likely you will succeed at Skill Tests:

Agility is your speed, dexterity, and physical readiness.

Brawn is your durability, endurance, and physical prowess.

Combat is your ability to use ranged and melee weapons.

Fellowship is your charisma, likability, and social savvy.

Intelligence is your ability to learn and study facts.

Perception is your senses and ability to react.

Willpower is your mental resolve and ability for magic.

Decide as a group which of one of these two approaches everyone will use to generate Primary Attributes. Then, write these values on the first page of your survivor sheet.

Randomized Attributes: Roll 2D10, add the two values together and then add 30 to determine the final sum. That means if your dice land on faces "9" and "8", you'll end up with 47% (9+8+30). Generate seven values and assign them however you like to your Primary Attributes.

Standard Array: Assign these values however you like across the seven Primary Attributes: 50%, 45%, 45%, 40%, 40%, 40%, and 35%.

Secondary Attributes

Your Secondary Attribute values equal the tens digit of the related Primary Attribute plus any Secondary Attribute Modifiers your Profession confers to you. Each is abbreviated throughout the book:

Agility Bonus [AB] affects some weapon Damage and chase scenes.

Brawn Bonus [BB] affects Damage Thresholds and some weapon Damage.

Combat Bonus [CB] affects most Blackpowder, Melee & Ranged Damage.

Fellowship Bonus [FB] affects how many people you influence and magic.

Intelligence Bonus [IB] affects healing and total supplies you can carry.

Perception Bonus [PB] affects Initiative Modifier and miscellaneous modifiers.

Willpower Bonus [WB] affects Peril Thresholds, crafting, and modifiers for magic.

For example, if you had a 42% Agility and a Secondary Attribute Modifier of +1 [AB], you'd have a 5 Agility Bonus [AB] (4+1).

Derive these values based on your Primary Attribute now on the first page of your survivor sheet.

Step 4: Social Class

Despite your ancestry, the caste you were born into informs your speech patterns, mannerisms, and style. It also determines how many silver pieces you begin gameplay with.

Social Class Benefits & Drawbacks

When attempting to interact with a creature of your same Social Class using Fellowship-based Skills, gain a Help Die. When using social Skills to interact with others of a different Social Class, you suffer a Hindrance Die.

If you are one of the Forgotten ancestries, assume that you are Lowborn in human society and have a different Social Class when among your own ancestry. Work with the GM on any exceptions in their campaign world.

Roll a D100 to determine your Social Class, and write it on the first page of your survivor sheet. Write your starting silver pieces on the second page.

D100	Social Class	Starting Silver Pieces
1 to 50	Lowborn	11 silver pieces
51 to 90	Commoner	22 silver pieces
91 to 100	Aristocrat	33 silver pieces

Lowborn: Your days were spent working from sun up to sun down. You likely worked six days a week, with only special holy days providing respite. You lived in constant deference, humble in spirit but hearty in lifeblood for what meager riches your family could afford.

Commoner: You grew up among a family that broke free from the feudal order, a member of a burgeoning middle class. The rise of commercial growth in townships and cities gave you the freedom the lowborn lacked: the ability to forge your own life without the protection of the aristocracy.

Aristocrat: You were born within a family whose name is traced back to old nobility. Your life has afforded you many luxuries. Patronage, big responsibilities, and social networking define the differences between your family and the nouveau riche. Your pedigree and social refinement often inspire resentment and discomfort.

Step 5: Upbringing

Nature versus nurture is an age-old debate, but there is little doubt that the conditions you were raised in set you on a path. An Upbringing determines your starting Profession choices.

Roll a D100 to determine your Upbringing and write it on the first page of your survivor sheet.

Some survivors will also get a suit of armor; write it down on the second page. Next to it, write its Armor Damage Threshold Modifier, as you'll need it when extrapolating your Damage Thresholds later.



D100	Upbringing	Armor	Armor Damage Threshold Modifier
1 to 14	Academic	NONE	NONE
15 to 29	Cultured	Quilted armor	+1
30 to 43	Forsaken	Hide armor	+1
44 to 56	Industrious	Leather armor	+2
57 to 70	Militant	Brigandine armor	+3
71 to 85	Opportunistic	Quilted armor	+1
86 to 100	Reverent	NONE	NONE

Academic: You were raised to be an avid reader, learning that knowledge is the ultimate weapon. Whether taught by schoolmarms or nascent arcanists, you were taught to stay curious.

Cultured: From penny theaters to penny dreadfuls, you were raised in cultures other than your own since birth. Taught the values of expression, you take immense pride in your abilities.

Forsaken: You were raised outside of common society and have had little chance to integrate until now. Maybe you grew up on the streets, among wolves, or are the last scion of a noble house.

Industrious: You were raised in a family of laborers. Whether crofters or servants, your family forced you to work to put food on the table.

Militant: You were raised in a family where discipline ruled your life, as it meant the difference between survival and death. Your ancestors met their doom at the end of a sword instead of in a sickbed.

Opportunistic: You were raised to take advantage of every situation and have had to be underhanded to get what you want.

Reverent: You were raised to celebrate the gods. Rituals are a part of life, and you have lived by the holy works. Or, maybe you were an orphan who listened to the doomsayers on street corners.

Step 6: Profession

Professions are the hallmark of **ZWEIHÄNDER**, representing people from different walks of life. It imparts several abilities to you, including a unique Professional Talent. This will be one of the most important steps in the process, so follow every instruction below. Profession choices are tied directly to your Upbringing.

Referencing your survivor's Upbringing, roll a D100 three times on its related table below to generate 3 different Professions. Read the brief descriptions of each, choose the most intriguing one, and write your Profession's name on the first page of your survivor sheet. If your Profession has a plus sign (+) by it, you can use spells. Mark a plus sign beside your Profession.

At this point, you may be compelled to change your Primary Attributes. Revisit this option at Step 19: Finalize Sheet.

Your Profession also begins with 2 tools of their trade.

Academic Professions

D100	Profession	Brief Description	Tool	Tool
1 to 6	Actor	Magician of the stage, captivating audiences with costumes and wit.	makeup kit	scripts
7 to 13	Antiquarian	Devoted seeker of knowledge, history, and hidden truths.	artifact catalog	magnifying glass
14 to 20	Apothecary	Blending archaic remedies to make potions and poisons.	herb jars	mortar & pestle
21 to 27	Arbiter	Devoted to order, wielding both sword and justice with unyielding resolve.	gavel	law book
28 to 34	Diabolist +	Dabbler in dark arts, seeking primordial knowledge and facing condemnation.	grimoire	occult tools
35 to 40	Engineer	Master builder and inventor, transforming materials into structures and siege engines.	measurement tools	schematics
41 to 46	Envoy	Diplomatic deal broker, turning rivalries into cooperation.	diplomatic seals	letters of marque
47 to 52	Etherealist +	Weaver of spells from the Ethereal Veil, believing in mortal control over magic.	astral charts	grimoire
53 to 58	Informer	Sly gatherer and seller of secrets, indispensable yet untrusted.	decryption book	disguise kit
59 to 65	Investigator	Analyzes criminal activity, linking clues in a "mind palace" to reconstruct narratives.	casebook	magnifying glass
66 to 72	Messenger	Courier who navigates obstacles to deliver information.	sealed letters	weatherproof scroll case
73 to 79	Pamphleteer	Disseminator of printed materials, shaping public knowledge and challenging authority.	broadsheets	sling bag
80 to 86	Scribe	Skilled in translation in a world reliant on the written word.	glasses	writing kit
87 to 93	Theologian +	Scholar of divine mysteries, exploring faith's depths and its implications on society.	grimoire	holy book
94 to 100	Wand Wizard +	Master of arcane arts, wielding wands to channel spells with precision and power.	grimoire	heavy robes

Cultured Professions

D100	Profession	Brief Description	Tool	Tool
1 to 6	Astrologer +	Interprets celestial bodies, divines the future, and seeks lost heavenly knowledge.	grimoire	star charts
7 to 13	Bailiff	Collects tolls, enforces local government, and faces resentment and displacement.	badge of office	legal writs
14 to 20	Basebrawler	Athletic competitor in a violent medieval game, combining physicality and teamwork.	balls & bases in sack	team tabard
21 to 27	Bravo	Flamboyant fencer, walking a fine line between fame and infamy.	fancy cape	Venetian mask
28 to 34	Cadet	Military student mastering warcraft, tactics, and leadership, aspiring to glory.	military uniform	training manual
35 to 40	Camp Follower	Supports armies through various roles and surviving through adaptability.	cooking pot	healing herbs
41 to 46	Chef	Culinary artist, wielding knives with skill and sometimes fighting with them.	kitchen utensils	recipe book
47 to 52	Courtier	Political schemer, using insight and flattery to manipulate and ascend.	etiquette guide	intricate fan
53 to 58	Entertainer	Brings joy through performance and walks a line between fame and danger.	book of poetry	musical instrument
59 to 65	Explorer	Adventurous diplomatic rogue, seeking new lands for glory, facing dangers with luck.	astrolabe	map
66 to 72	Fop	Charismatic social butterfly, living lavishly while hiding a loner's melancholy.	elegant cane	polished codpiece
73 to 79	Freebooter	Robin Hood-esque hero, stealing from the rich, fighting with charm and flourish.	heavy boots	old maps of lost treasures
80 to 86	Minstrel	Adept storyteller and jack of all trades, captivating with tales.	musical instrument	songbook
87 to 93	Provocateur	Mystery and spycraft, adept in social infiltration and seduction.	disguise kit	book of contacts
94 to 100	Valet	Master of discretion and social maneuvering and skilled in subtle intrigue.	ledger	tailoring kit

Forsaken Professions

D100	Profession	Brief Description	Tool	Tool
1 to 6	Beggar	Lives in poverty, relying on quick judgments for survival.	false appendage	tattered cup
7 to 13	Blasphemer	Denies the gods' dominion, finding strength and freedom in defiance.	book of blasphemies	forbidden texts
14 to 20	Con Artist	Master forger, creating perfect counterfeits for profit, living a life of secrecy.	disguise kit	forged documents
21 to 27	Courtesan	Uses allure to gain wealth and information, capable of influencing high society.	elegant robes	perfume
28 to 34	Footpad	Solves disputes with violence, enforcing will with intimidation or brute force.	crowbar	dark cloak
35 to 40	Gong Farmer	Deals with waste and vermin, seen as an omen of plague.	mask	shovel
41 to 46	Guttersnipe	A street-smart rogue engaging in petty theft, skilled in urban survival.	coin clippers	street map
47 to 52	Hedgewise +	Wields ancient magic without formal training, living in fear of persecution.	grimoire	herbs
53 to 58	Mortician	Specialist in death rituals, burying the dead, navigating the delicate trade of mortality.	death records	embalming tools
59 to 65	Old Believer+	A hedge wizard blending ancient wisdom, herbs, and magic into remedies.	grimoire	religious icons
66 to 72	Pit Fighter	Gladiator who thrives on spectacle and violence.	fighting pit maps	polished codpiece
73 to 79	Pugilist	Bare-knuckle fighter, embracing brutality of pugilism for survival and pride.	training manual	trophies
80 to 86	Rake	Fallen aristocrat, mingling with society's dregs, leveraging charm and wit.	blackmail material	book of secrets
87 to 93	Vagabond	Wanders the road and urban areas relying on trickery and know-how to get by.	backpack	tent
94 to 100	Wrestler	Athlete-performer, captivating audiences with costumes, wit, and daring stunts.	costume	training oil

Industrious Professions

D100	Profession	Brief Description	Tool	Tool
1 to 6	Animal Tamer	Solitary living, taming creatures from pigeons to bears.	animal treats	whistle
7 to 13	Artisan	Skilled crafter producing civilization's essentials, honing their trade.	artisan tools	paper & charcoal
14 to 20	Barber Surgeon	Essential medical figure, performing surgery with a blend of skill and messiness.	barber's razors	chirurgery tools
21 to 27	Bounty Hunter	Ruthless tracker of the wanted, lives between lawfulness and solitude.	book of laws	manacles
28 to 34	Cheapjack	Traveling peddler selling shoddy goods with sleazy charm, thriving on deceit.	haggler's guide	merchandise backpack
35 to 40	Coachee	Skilled driver, delivering people and goods against all odds.	route maps	stovepipe hat & storm cloak
41 to 46	Gamekeeper	Survivalist, protector of woodlands, living in solitude with a bond to nature.	snares	wildlife guide
47 to 52	Jailer	Guardian of prisoners, enduring their pleas, skilled in interrogation.	skeleton keys	torturer's kit
53 to 58	Laborer	Engages in hard work, often overlooked but crucial to society.	massive jug	thick leather gloves
59 to 65	Nomad	Lives a transient life, adapting to environments, valuing freedom and family.	tent	traveling cloak
66 to 72	Peasant	Hardworking field worker, sustainer of families through relentless labor.	pocket prayer book	seed pouch
73 to 79	Sailor	Adventurous seafarer, braving vast oceans, living with freedom and peril.	compass	sextant
80 to 86	Servant	Invisible laborer in aristocratic service, privy to secrets, enduring long hours.	book of gossip	uniform
87 to 93	Stevedore	Dockworker, enduring physically demanding tasks and protecting cargo.	endless bottle of booze	loading hook
94 to 100	Trapper	Fur and pelt hunter, setting traps in solitude, trading in luxury and game.	skinning blade	traps

Militant Professions

D100	Profession	Brief Description	Tool	Tool
1 to 6	Berserker	Fierce warrior channeling rage into prowess, terrifying enemies with ferocity.	heavy animal furs	war paint
7 to 13	Dragoon	Mounted soldier skilled in rapid strikes, blending cavalry and infantry tactics.	horse tack	spurs
14 to 20	Foot Soldier	Backbone of armies, disciplined and versatile, excelling in formation.	battle standard	tabard
21 to 27	Hedge Knight	Wandering knight, upholding chivalry and seeking honor through deeds.	book of chivalry	horse tack
28 to 34	Hireling	Mercenary for hire, offering specialized skills for temporary service.	contracts	travel bags
35 to 40	Irregular	Unconventional soldier, employing guerrilla tactics and surprise.	camouflage kit	guerrilla warfare manual
41 to 46	Marine	Elite soldier specializing in naval boarding actions and warfare, fiercely loyal.	belaying pin	naval codebook
47 to 52	Nightwatcher	Guardian of the night, vigilant against unseen threats after dark.	lantern on pole	rain cloak
53 to 58	Officer	Vital logistician, managing supplies and equipment, ensuring readiness.	log book	scales
59 to 65	Outrider	Scout and messenger, excelling in reconnaissance and rapid communication.	horse tack	telescope
66 to 72	Reeve	Local official overseeing justice, bridging the community and the ruling authority.	badge of office	land registries
73 to 79	Rune Warrior +	Warrior wielding enchanted runes, blending physical with mystical.	grimoire	runestones
80 to 86	Sellsword	Mercenary motivated by coin, loyalty bound to the highest bidder.	contracts	heavy coin purse
87 to 93	Slayer	Hunter of creatures, fearless in the pursuit of monsters.	creature bait	creature bestiary
94 to 100	Squire	Apprentice to a knight, learning the ways of chivalry, combat, and noble service.	polishing kit	squire's handbook

Opportunistic Professions

D100	Profession	Brief Description	Tool	Tool
1 to 6	Anarchist	Champion of change, using anarchy to shake foundations and revel in chaos.	fire starting tools	propaganda posters
7 to 13	Bonepicker	Scavenger of belongings, turning tragedy and forgotten remains into personal gain.	bone tools	scavenging bag
14 to 20	Buccaneer	Sea-bound raider thriving on plunder, camaraderie, and open waves.	chest w/ backstraps	pirate flag
21 to 27	Burglar	Master of stealth and theft, excelling in the art of acquiring wealth undetected.	crowbar	grappling hook w/ rope
28 to 34	Charlatan	Master deceiver employing disguises and smooth talk to swindle and manipulate.	disguise kit	mesmerist's pendulum
35 to 40	Fence	Criminal underworld broker, dealing in stolen goods with a life of secrecy.	book of prices	secret ledger
41 to 46	Fugitive	On the run, living a life marked by brief freedoms and constant survival.	disguise kit	map of safe houses
47 to 52	Gambler	Dashing charmer betting on life's fortunes, always playing for high stakes.	loaded deck of cards	loaded dice
53 to 58	Graverobber	Exploiter of the dead, braving supernatural dangers for macabre trade.	lantern	shovel
59 to 65	Jester	Court's provocateur, wielding satire as a weapon, entertaining and offensive.	book of japes	juggling bag
66 to 72	Quacksalver	Peddler of false cures, exploiting the desperate with dubious remedies.	potion bottles	quack medicine book
73 to 79	Racketeer	Manipulator, leveraging criminal enterprises for protection and profit.	crowbar	protection racket ledger
80 to 86	Rustler	Cattle thief living on the fringe, challenging the law and rustling livestock for profit.	branding iron	telescope
87 to 93	Smuggler	Master of clandestine trade, moving forbidden or taxed goods past authorities.	false documents	hidden pockets in clothes
94 to 100	Vigilante	Shadowy avenger meting out justice where the law fails, shielded by anonymity.	belt-pouches	costume

Reverent Professions

D100	Profession	Brief Description	Tool	Tool
1 to 6	Adherent +	Devoted follower of a faith or ideology, spreading beliefs through example.	grimoire	prayer beads
7 to 13	Apostle	Fledgling warrior-priest inspiring devotion through violence.	holy book	holy wine & wafers
14 to 20	Chosen +	Believed to be selected by a higher power for a great purpose or mission.	amulet	grimoire
21 to 27	Cultist +	Member of an illegal group with extreme devotion to a forbidden cause or entity.	grimoire	ritual knife
28 to 34	Doomsayer	Proclaims impending disaster, warning others of future calamities.	book of heresies	self-flagellation tools
35 to 40	Friar	Religious monks committed to community service, prayer, and spreading faith.	brewing kit	holy book
41 to 46	Hermit	Lives in solitude, seeking enlightenment or escape from societal norms.	diaries	meditation mat
47 to 52	Minister	Clergy member providing spiritual guidance and performing sacred rites.	Roman collar	sermon book
53 to 58	Monk	Lives in a monastic order, dedicated to prayer, work, and study.	book of chants	meditation beads
59 to 65	Sin Eater +	Absorbs others' sins through ritual, cleanses souls through personal sacrifice.	grimoire	ritual bowl
66 to 72	Skald	Poet and historian, preserving and recounting the lore and legends.	musical instrument	war paint
73 to 79	Spiritualist +	Communicates with spirits, seeking to bridge the mortal world and the afterlife.	grimoire	spirit board
80 to 86	Warrior-Pilgrim	Travels to sacred sites seeking enlightenment or fulfillment of a vow.	pocket prayer book	sacrificial bowl
87 to 93	Witch +	Often misunderstood magician, harnessing natural energies.	grimoire	magical tools
94 to 100	Witness +	Observes and testifies to miracles with a religious or moral imperative.	grimoire	holy texts

Step 7: Damage & Peril Condition Tracks

Damage comes from being hurt by weapons, falling, fire, acid, and other situations. **Peril** is a concept that represents mental agony and physical fatigue.

Suffering Damage

When this happens, you move one or more steps down the **Damage Condition Track**. When you are healed, move up it instead.

Damage Condition Track

Alive: You have old scars, stitches, and sutures. This is the default “unharmed” condition.

Lightly Wounded: You have cuts or light bruising with mild pains.

Moderately Wounded: You have deep bruises, cuts, or lesions.

Seriously Wounded: Your body is covered in deep bruises or cuts.

Grievously Wounded: Your clothing is soiled in blood and sweat.

Dying!: When you first reach this state, you suffer an Injury. If you are suffering from 4 or more Injuries or Afflictions (or a combination thereof) and the duration isn't up, you are slain unless you take on a permanent Scar.

Your survivor begins at Alive; place a paperclip over it on the front of your survivor sheet.

Suffering Peril

When this happens, you move one or more steps down the **Peril Condition Track**. When you sleep, move up it instead.

Peril Condition Track

Fine: You're the very picture of health! This is the default “unhindered” condition.

Imperiled: You're operating under minimal strain.

-5% To Skill Tests: Your blood is running hot, and you have labored breathing.

-10% To Skill Tests: Your body gives way to tiredness and you can barely think straight.

-15% To Skill Tests: You toil with every step you take, and your vision is blurred.

Exhausted! -20% To Skill Tests. When you first reach this state, you suffer an Affliction. If you are suffering from 4 or more Afflictions or Injuries (or a combination thereof) and the duration isn't up, you are slain unless you take on a permanent Scar. Learn more in Chapter 8: Healing & Hazards.

Your survivor begins at Fine; place a paperclip over it on the front of your survivor sheet.

Calculating Damage Thresholds

Calculate your **BASE Damage Threshold** by adding [BB] + your armor's **Damage Threshold Modifier**. Calculate all other **Damage Thresholds** as **BASE + 6**, **BASE + 12**, **BASE + 18**. For instance, if your [BB] is 5, your **Damage Thresholds** would be 5 / 11 / 17 / 23. Write these values on the first page of your survivor sheet.

Calculating Peril Thresholds

Calculate your **BASE Peril Threshold** by adding [WB] + 3. Calculate all other **Peril Thresholds** as **BASE + 6**, **BASE + 12**, **BASE + 18**. For instance, if your [WB] is 7, your **Peril Thresholds** would be 10 / 16 / 22 / 28.

Write these values on the first page of your survivor sheet.

Step 8: Initiative Modifier

Your **Initiative Modifier** is added to a die roll to determine the order of actions in scenes.

Determine your Initiative Modifier by adding 3+[PB], and write it on the second page of your survivor sheet.

Your Survival

Your old life is over, and you were irrevocably changed when you faced death and somehow managed to survive.

Step 9: Age

Roll a D100 to determine your current age. These broad descriptions are inclusive of human and Forgotten ancestries, but feel free to determine specific age if you feel it necessary. Write it on the first page of your survivor sheet.

D100	Age
1 to 10	Young
11 to 70	Adult
71 to 90	Middle-aged
91 to 100	Old

Step 10: Brush With Death

Less than a year ago, you either died and returned to life or you had a near-death experience. This moment shaped the life you live now: you're a survivor.

Your **Brush With Death** allows you to explore emotions and complexities not often addressed in other role-playing games. Utilized thoughtfully, it will make your experience with **ZWEIHÄNDER** a profound one for you and the other players. Your survivor may have other Brushes With Death as the story progresses.

Consider first whether your survivor had their own Brush With Death or if the entire group had the same Brush With Death that brought them together. Once decided, go to the next page and roll a D100 to determine the Brush With Death. Alternatively, you can create a new one.

If your group decides their survivors faced the same Brush With Death, work with the other players to find a suitable one.

Write it on the first page of your survivor sheet.



D100 Brush With Death

1 to 2	A chair eerily swayed at the top of the stairs, and as I sat in it, it pitched me over the edge.
3 to 4	A decrepit stagecoach made me its unwilling passenger on a journey to the underworld.
5 to 6	A dim light from a dead end revealed a lurking menace beyond.
7 to 8	A haunting melody by the lake lured me into a watery grave.
9 to 10	A haunting tune lulled me into a deep sleep from which I almost didn't awaken.
11 to 12	A night of carousing led to a fatal ambush that killed my friends while I survived.
13 to 14	A pedlar's strange artifact sealed my fate with a single touch.
15 to 16	A venomous bloom emitted a belladonna haze, putting me into a deep coma.
17 to 18	A whisper from my family's crypt nearly bound my soul to its residents.
19 to 20	An errant stroke of a stranger's pen released toxic ink, marking my last word.
21 to 22	An old bell tower had remained silent for years, but its sudden toll sent me over the edge.
23 to 24	An old trunk beckoned; upon opening it, it swallowed me into its emptiness.
25 to 26	An unexpected chime at the witching hour announced a dark presence at my door.
27 to 28	As a candle's flame flickered, a whisper warned me of a conflagration that nearly burned me alive.
29 to 30	As a windmill's gears spun up, an unseen force pushed me into its grinding mechanism.
31 to 32	As I clasped my grandmother's brooch, my vision was flooded from her tormented past.
33 to 34	As I investigated an unmarked grave, a pair of rotting hands pulled me into the soil beneath.
35 to 36	As I walked out my front door, I didn't see the shovel aimed at my head.
37 to 38	As the snare tightened around my leg and the world went dark, I knew I had made a mistake.
39 to 40	As the war hammer met my skull, I was startled by the lack of flesh on the hand that swung it.
41 to 42	Between the walls, footsteps echoed . . . someone was following, and they meant ill intent.
43 to 44	Crossing an old bridge at dusk, I emerged into a mist-shrouded realm of horror.
45 to 46	Curiosity got the better of me when a trap sealed my fate in the castle's dungeon.
47 to 48	Every uneven tick of the clock was a missed heartbeat, its off-beat rhythm sealing my fate.
49 to 50	Eyes from a painting of a ghoulish hellscape drew me into its frame of horror.

D100

Brush With Death

- 51 to 52 **Footprints from another age led me to fall into a deep cavern.**
- 53 to 54 **I know hunger and desperation drove them to feast upon my flesh.**
- 55 to 56 **I ran towards the sound of a crying baby, but it wasn't a child I found at the path's end.**
- 57 to 58 **I should have paid closer attention when my father taught me how to properly fell a tree.**
- 59 to 60 **I thought cheating at dice was a petty crime, but they proved me wrong.**
- 61 to 62 **I thought it an exaggeration to die of fright until I saw the unknown malignant face in my mirror.**
- 63 to 64 **I told them everything I knew, but they still pushed my bound and weighted body from the ship.**
- 65 to 66 **I was quite pleased with the newly found silken scarf until it tightened around my neck.**
- 67 to 68 **Leaning over the village well, a pair of rotten arms and wet, dark hair engulfed me in their grasp.**
- 69 to 70 **My own shadow came to life and hunted me down in the forest.**
- 71 to 72 **My shouted blasphemy was answered by the devout with cudgels and fists.**
- 73 to 74 **Shapes moved behind a curtain, and curiosity got the better of me as I fell through the glass.**
- 75 to 76 **The aroma of a seemingly innocent pastry concealed its secret ingredient: poison.**
- 77 to 78 **The blade slid into my gut, but the look of satisfaction in my friend's eyes surprised me the most.**
- 79 to 80 **The haunting aria of a troop of actors drew me into a grim tour of their theater.**
- 81 to 82 **The light drew our ship in, leading us to crash onto unknown shores.**
- 83 to 84 **The rain-slick tiles on the roof proved to be my undoing.**
- 85 to 86 **The voices lied when they told me my offered blood would be returned to me with great power.**
- 87 to 88 **The warnings that I should not travel in the winter storm had not been an exaggeration.**
- 89 to 90 **Trying on a seemingly benign shoe, it took me on a strange journey in its long-dead owner's life.**
- 91 to 92 **Upon robbing a crypt, its guardian spirit marked me as its successor.**
- 93 to 94 **What I thought was a single leech was instead a writhing mass I didn't imagine possible.**
- 95 to 96 **When I opened the forbidden grimoire, it had a single name written on all its pages: my own.**
- 97 to 98 **While mesmerized by the flames of a campfire, I was robbed by highwaymen and left for dead.**
- 99 to 100 **Whilst wandering through an overgrown menagerie, plants with a sanguine thirst ensnared me.**

Step II: First Scar

Although you persevered your Brush With Death, you were left with a physical impairment, emotional trauma, or a spiritual wound. This is your **First Scar**, and each represents a journey of healing, struggle, and change.

Roll a D100 to determine your First Scar. You will determine your Scar's effects in the [Appendix](#)

D100	Scar	D100	Scar	D100	Scar
1	Afraid of Shadows	17	Erratic Pulse	33	Haunted Gaze
2	Bad-blooded	18	Eternal Insomnia	34	Haunted Memories
3	Bad Stomach	19	Facial Scar	35	Head Trauma
4	Blighted Sight	20	Fading Voice	36	Heatstroke Trauma
5	Blunted Intellect	21	Failing Heart	37	Hobbled Leg
6	Brain Trauma	22	False Nose	38	Hole in Skull
7	Brittle Bones	23	Far-sighted	39	Hollow Trances
8	Burn Scars	24	Fear of Mirrors	40	Horrific Scarring
9	Cabin Fever	25	Flashbacks	41	Ice in My Veins
10	Choleric Temperament	26	Flock of Death	42	Iron Hand
11	Chronic Vomit	27	Frail-blooded	43	Iron-hearted
12	Combat Anxiety	28	Frostbite Scars	44	Jittery Nerves
13	Dark Passenger	29	Gambler's Lament	45	King's Disease
14	Distant Heart	30	Gnarled Hand	46	Lead-footed
15	Echoing Tinnitus	31	Hard of Hearing	47	Leg Harness
16	End of Line	32	Haunted by Your Past	48	Lethargic Mind

D100	Scar	D100	Scar	D100	Scar
49	Lily-livered	67	Ominous Whispers	85	Split Face
50	Lingering Disease	68	Ongoing Distress	86	Sticky Fingers
51	Lost Senses	69	Painful Memories	87	Sunlight Aversion
52	Mark of Shame	70	Panic-stricken	88	Swill Belly
53	Melancholic Temperament	71	Persecution Complex	89	Tormented Sleep
54	Metal Jaw	72	Phantom Limb	90	Trembling Hands
55	Metal Plate	73	Phlegmatic Temperament	91	Troubled Soul
56	Milky Eye	74	Plagued by Nightmares	92	Tunnel Vision
57	Missing Eye	75	Poor Constitution	93	Twisted Spine
58	Muted Pain	76	Pyrophobia	94	Unsettling Aura
59	Ne'er-Do-Well	77	Raspy Breath	95	Unsteady Gait
60	Near-sighted	78	Ruptured Eardrum	96	Weak Grip
61	Nerve Damage	79	Sanguine Temperament	97	Weak Lungs
62	Night Blindness	80	Severed Fingers	98	Weight of the World
63	Night Fright	81	Shattered Rib	99	Withering Mind
64	Nightfather's Due	82	Shattered Vertebrae	100	Xenophobic Tension
65	Nightmare Disorder	83	Skull Plate		
66	Old War Wound	84	Sluggish Pace		

Step 12: Memento

A **Memento** of that perilous moment accompanies you everywhere you go. As a tangible fragment of your Brush With Death, this object is laden with symbolic weight.

Whether it is a cherished cameo, the emblematic ring of your once-great house, a half-broken toy, or a military accolade from a time you'd rather forget, your Memento is a constant companion, reminding you of your resilience and the ephemeral nature of life.

Benefits of Your Memento

When you're in a scene related to your Brush With Death, hold the Memento to ignore all Peril Condition Track penalties. These benefits last until you escape or defeat the situation.

Consider both your Brush With Death and Scar. What would this Memento look like? Write it on the second page of your survivor sheet under Small Objects. Learn more about Small Objects in [Chapter 6: Equipment](#).

Step 13: Tragic Flaw & Inner Strength

In the wake of your death, you developed two distinctive and wildly different traits. Your Tragic Flaw and Inner Strength serve as role-playing tools

Tragic Flaw

Inner turmoil, doubt, and raw emotions are characterized by your **Tragic Flaw**. It is a dark reflection that came from your Brush With Death and often hinders your personal growth or relationships. Recognizing and addressing these imperfections is a key part of your story.

Benefits of Your Tragic Flaw

Call upon your Tragic Flaw in a scene when it makes sense for the narrative, and you will gain additional Reward Points at the end of the session. If you face death again, you will gain another Tragic Flaw. Reward Points are spent on Unlocking new abilities, covered in [Chapter 4: Professions](#).

Roll a D100 to determine three Tragic Flaws and choose the one that sounds most appealing. Alternatively, create a new one. Write one of them on the first page of your survivor sheet.



D100	Tragic Flaw	D100	Tragic Flaw	D100	Tragic Flaw
1 to 2	Bitter Isolation	37 to 38	Fragile Honor	73 to 74	Ravenous Hunger
3 to 4	Blinding Zealotry	39 to 40	Grimly Determined	75 to 76	Relentless Persecution
5 to 6	Boundless Wrath	41 to 42	Haunting Regret	77 to 78	Ruthless Ambition
7 to 8	Burden of Command	43 to 44	Highly Doubtful	79 to 80	Sacrificial Lamb
9 to 10	Callous Disregard	45 to 46	Impetuous Wrath	81 to 82	Shadowed Past
11 to 12	Catastrophic Failure	47 to 48	Inescapable Despair	83 to 84	Spectral Fear
13 to 14	Completely Obedient	49 to 50	Inexorable Decline	85 to 86	Stubborn Ways
15 to 16	Corrosive Jealousy	51 to 52	Infernal Pactmaker	87 to 88	Twisted Loyalty
17 to 18	Crippling Guilt	53 to 54	Insatiable Greed	89 to 90	Unattainable Redemption
19 to 20	Curse of Birth	55 to 56	Insidious Deception	91 to 92	Unbridled Desire
21 to 22	Debilitating Fear	57 to 58	Ironclad Vows	93 to 94	Unfettered Ambition
23 to 24	Deep Loneliness	59 to 60	Malignant Envy	95 to 96	Unspeakable Secrets
25 to 26	Destructive Obsession	61 to 62	Merciless Justice	97 to 98	Unyielding Abandon
27 to 28	Doomed Love	63 to 64	Morbid Fascination	99 to 100	Vengeful Spirit
29 to 30	Emotionally Detached	65 to 66	Mortal Enmity		
31 to 32	Eternal Mourning	67 to 68	Obsessive Fixation		
33 to 34	Forbidden Knowledge	69 to 70	Overbearing Hubris		
35 to 36	Forlorn Hope	71 to 72	Perilous Mindset		

Inner Strength

Your **Inner Strength** is your resilience against life's adversities. This defines you as more than a survivor—it transforms you into a symbol of hope and perseverance. Embracing it is key to your personal growth, giving depth to your narrative and presenting opportunities for the GM to craft challenges that highlight it.

Benefits of Your Inner Strength

Call upon your Inner Strength in a scene when it makes sense for the narrative, and you will gain additional Reward Points at the end of the session. If you face death again, you will gain another Inner Strength.

Reward Points are spent on Unlocking new abilities, covered in **Chapter 4: Professions**.

Roll a D100 to determine three Inner Strengths and choose the one that sounds most appealing.

Alternatively, create a new one. Write one of them on the first page of your survivor sheet.



D100	Inner Strength	D100	Inner Strength	D100	Inner Strength
1 to 2	Adaptable Nature	37 to 38	Heroic Sacrifice	73 to 74	Radiant Hope
3 to 4	Artistic Talent	39 to 40	Humility	75 to 76	Relentless Perseverance
5 to 6	Astute Insight	41 to 42	Indomitable Spirit	77 to 78	Resilient Mind
7 to 8	Benevolent Spirit	43 to 44	Infallible Memory	79 to 80	Resolute Calm
9 to 10	Boundless Creativity	45 to 46	Infectious Enthusiasm	81 to 82	Steadfast Loyalty
11 to 12	Boundless Optimism	47 to 48	Innate Wisdom	83 to 84	Strategic Mind
13 to 14	Compassionate Soul	49 to 50	Inspirational Presence	85 to 86	Strong Sense of Justice
15 to 16	Creative Genius	51 to 52	Intrepid Explorer	87 to 88	Unassailable Honor
17 to 18	Dauntless Bravery	53 to 54	Intuitive Understanding	89 to 90	Unbreakable Resolve
19 to 20	Deep Empathy	55 to 56	Iron Will	91 to 92	Unflagging Energy
21 to 22	Deep Compassion	57 to 58	Keen Intellect	93 to 94	Unshakeable Faith
23 to 24	Eloquent Speaker	59 to 60	Loyal Friend	95 to 96	Unwavering Courage
25 to 26	Empathetic Heart	61 to 62	Moral Integrity	97 to 98	Unyielding Integrity
27 to 28	Enduring Patience	63 to 64	Mystical Connection	99 to 100	Visionary Idealist
29 to 30	Fearless Adventurer	65 to 66	Natural Leader		
31 to 32	Fierce Protector	67 to 68	Noble Purpose		
33 to 34	Genuine Kindness	69 to 70	Protective Instinct		
35 to 36	Healing Touch	71 to 72	Quiet Confidence		

Step 14: Name & Bond Talent

There aren't any strict naming conventions you need to follow. When in doubt, select something evocative that rolls off the tongue easily. Colorful names like Ser Sebastian Bastian, Danziger Eckhardt, Calliope DuVrey, and Blixia Killbride have a distinctive ring, ones that aren't easily forgotten.

Once decided, sign your survivor's full name on the first page of your survivor sheet.

Form One Bond

Strange and inexplicable forces drew you together with other survivors. It often appears as a hollow ringing in one's ears, the hackles rising on the back of the neck, or a sense of déjà vu when you first meet another survivor. But among the survivors in your party, two of you share a singular, almost supernatural **Bond Talent** with one another. Your Bond with them may be that of friendly rivals, former enemies, kinsfolk, lovers, fellow orphans, as a student and teacher, or something else.

Bonded Talents are always cooperatively used, so you and the other player must agree when the Bond is activated during gameplay. If your Bonded survivor is ever retired, form a new one with another survivor.

Pick one other survivor. One of you must roll D100 on the following table to determine a unique Bond you and the other survivor share from the table below. Write the name of the survivor and the Bond Talent on the second page of your survivor sheet.

In cases with an uneven number of players, 3 survivors share the same one or every survivor playing can share the same one. For one-on-one play, assume that the survivor has an NPC they share a Bond Talent with.



D100	Bond Talent	Effect
1 to 5	Blood Oath	At any time, you can move one step up the Damage Condition Track, but your Bonded survivor must move one step down. You must be able to see one another to use this.
6 to 10	Bound by Magic	When you fail to cast a spell, your Bonded survivor who can see you may re-roll Occultism using their abilities, but you must accept the results of the re-roll.
11 to 15	Comrade in Arms	While Close by your Bonded survivor, add +1 to Damage and Peril you inflict. You must be able to see one another to use this.
16 to 20	Dream-linked	You can ask the GM to gain a clue about solving a mystery or challenge inspired by a shared dream with your Bonded survivor. This is usable once per session.
21 to 25	Fated to Meet	Swap places on the Initiative Ladder anytime, or give up your Turn to your Bonded survivor during a fight scene. You must be able to see one another to use this.
26 to 30	Fellow Orphans	During a fight scene, instead of Banking Action Points, you can give them to your Bonded survivor. You must be able to see one another to use this.
31 to 35	Former Enemies	When Close by your Bonded survivor and they move two or more steps down the Damage Condition Track, roll a Coordination Test. If successful, they move down one less step.
36 to 40	Friendly Rivals	As a fight scene begins, place a D6 in front of you on face "1". Add this as a cumulative value to Damage and Peril you and your Bonded survivor both inflict. Every Round thereafter, incrementally move it to its next face (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and capping out at 6). Should either of you fail to inflict Damage or Peril in a single Round, reset it to face "1" and start the process over.
41 to 45	Keepers of a Secret	You and your Bonded survivor can speak using an empathic language like telepathy. You must be able to see one another to use this.
46 to 50	Kinsfolk	Whenever your Bonded survivor is surrounded or Surprised, you move Close by them. You must be able to see one another to use this.
51 to 55	Linked by Prophecy	Whenever your Bonded survivor is moved to Dying! or Exhausted! during a fight scene, you gain 3 Action Points that must be spent now. You must be able to see one another to use this.
56 to 60	Old Flame	During a fight scene, if your Bonded survivor fails an Attack Action, you Flip To Succeed on your next Attack Action against the same creature. You must be able to see one another to use this.
61 to 65	On the Run Together	Providing you and your Bonded survivor can see one another, Flip To Succeed Stealth Tests. You must be able to see one another to use this.
66 to 70	Protector & Charge	During a fight scene, when your Bonded survivor is Close by you and fails to resist an effect, you can attempt to resist for them (but they must accept the results of the re-roll).

D100	Bond Talent	Effect
71 to 75	Reincarnated Souls	When you are Close to one another, add your Bonded survivor's Skill Ranks to your own Skill Tests. You cannot exceed 3 Skill Ranks.
76 to 80	Spirit Keepers	Both you and your Bonded survivor treat their weapons as if they have the Blessed Quality. You must be able to see one another to use this.
81 to 85	Star-crossed Lovers	At any time, you can move one step up the Peril Condition Track, while your Bonded survivor will move one step down. You must be able to see one another to use this.
86 to 90	Student & Teacher	Choose who is the student and who is the teacher. Whenever the teacher Critically Succeeds a Skill Test, the student moves to Fine on the Peril Condition Track. Whenever the student Critically Fails a Skill Test, the teacher moves to Fine on the Peril Condition Track. You must be able to see one another to use this.
91 to 95	Tragic Survivors	When you fail to resist becoming Stressed, Frightened, or Terrified, your Bonded survivor who can see you may re-roll Resolve using their abilities, but you must accept the results of the re-roll.
96 to 100	Twin Stars	Whenever your Bonded survivor rolls a Critical Success on a D100 with an Attack Action, you Bank 1 Action Point.

Step 15: Profession Details & Skills

Bookmark this page and flip to [Chapter 4: Professions](#). Write down your Profession Ability Table on an index card. As you go through this process, you will Unlock abilities that are a part of your Profession.

Mark that you have already Unlocked your Ancestral Talent by filling in the circle on the index card.

Unlock all 6 Skill Ranks by circling the +10% in your Skills on the first page of your survivor sheet. Mark that you have Unlocked all 6 Skill Ranks on the index card.

Step 16: General Talents

Bookmark this page and flip to [Chapter 5: General Talents](#). Referencing your Profession Ability Table from the index card, you will now Unlock 1 General Talent and carry over your General Talent's name and effects on the second page. Mark that you have Unlocked it on the index card.

For Spellcasters: If your Profession had a plus sign (+) beside it, you must Unlock Arcane, Chaos, Divine, or Folk Magic as your first General Talent. Sometimes, you will be given a choice as to which Talent you'll Unlock. Read the Talent to yourself, as you have some additional work to do in Step 18: For Spellcasters.

Step 17: Weapons & Supplies

Decide whether you want a Melee or Ranged weapon, then roll D100 on the table below to determine one you begin gameplay with.

Then, if you have a Skill Rank in Blackpowder, Melee, or Ranged, roll for additional weapons. For example, if you have a Skill Rank in Melee and Blackpowder, you gain 1 Melee and 1 Blackpowder weapon.

Bookmark this page and flip to [Chapter 6: Equipment](#). Write each weapon and its stats on its own index card, and record them into your weapon slots on the second page.

You also gain the following: 1 Supply Rating of laudanum & smelling salts. If you have a Blackpowder and/or a Ranged weapon, you also get 2 Supply Ratings in ammunition. Write all your supplies on the second page of your survivor sheet. Read the entry about abstracted encumbrance and Supply Rating.

D100	Melee Weapon
1 to 4	Basebrawl Mace
5 to 7	Battle Axe
8 to 10	Blackjack
11 to 13	Bohemian Earspoon
14 to 16	Bollock Dagger
17 to 19	Broadsword
20 to 22	Bullwhip
23 to 25	Court Sword
26 to 28	Cudgel
29 to 31	Dirk

D100	Melee Weapon
32 to 34	Estoc
35 to 37	Firehardened Spear
38 to 40	Flanged Mace
41 to 43	Garrote
44 to 46	Knuckleduster
47 to 49	Main Gauche
50 to 52	Military Lance
53 to 55	Misericorde
56 to 58	Morgenstern
59 to 61	Mortuary Sword
62 to 64	Pike
65 to 67	Pole Cleaver
68 to 70	Rapier
71 to 73	Sabre
74 to 76	Shiv
77 to 79	Sickle
80 to 82	Splitting Maul
83 to 85	Staff
86 to 88	Stiletto
89 to 91	Threshing Flail
92 to 94	War Hammer
95 to 97	Woodsmen's Axe
98 to 100	Zweihänder

D100 Ranged Weapon

1 to 10	Arbalest Crossbow
11 to 20	Bolas
21 to 30	Composite Bow
31 to 40	Hunting Bow
41 to 45	Javelin
46 to 55	Light Crossbow
56 to 65	Longbow
66 to 75	Shepherd's Sling
76 to 85	Throwing Axe
86 to 100	Throwing Knife

D100 Blackpowder Weapon

1 to 20	Arquebus
21 to 40	Blunderbuss
41 to 60	Dueling Pistol
61 to 80	Flintlock Pistol
81 to 100	Turnout Pistol

Step 18: For Spellcasters

Bookmark this page and flip to [Chapter 10: The Grimoire](#) to Starting Spells. Determine the spells you begin gameplay with based on your Thread of Arcane Magic, Beyonder of Chaos Magic, Deity of Divine Magic, or spells for Folk Magic. Write each spell on its own index card.

Step 19: Scar Effects & Finalize

Find Scars in the [Appendix](#), and write down its effects on the second page of your survivor sheet.

Were there any steps you missed? Did you want to redistribute your Primary Attributes in consideration of your Profession or change your Tragic Flaw or Inner Strength? Talk with the GM if you want to alter your survivor further.

Once complete, it's time to play your first session of **ZWEIHÄNDER!**

